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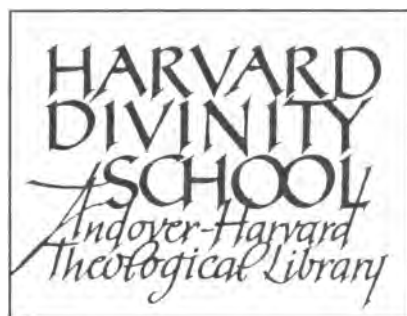
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THE
EDWARD ROBINSON CHAIR
OF
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

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THE
EDWARD ROBINSON CHAIR
OF
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY
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- I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHAIR by the Directors of the Seminary in accordance with the endowment of Charles Butler, LL.D.; and the choice of the incumbent, Prof. Charles A. Briggs, D.D.
- II. THE INAUGURATION SERVICES, January 20, 1891; with the Charge delivered by the Rev. David R. Frazer, D.D.
- III. THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS, on *The Authority of Holy Scripture*.
- IV. THE POSITION AND IMPORTANCE OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

THE
EDWARD ROBINSON CHAIR
OF
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

Thereupon President Butler addressed the Board of Directors as follows :

“The formal establishment by the Board of ‘The Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology’ fulfils the object desired in the provision which I have made for its endowment. I beg to express my satisfaction and gratitude for this action. It is in accord with the views of the distinguished Christian scholar in whose memory the Chair is founded. In a letter to the Board, dated January 20, 1837, accepting the Professorship of Sacred Literature, he said: ‘The Constitution properly requires every Professor to declare that he believes the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. This is placing the Bible in its true position as the only foundation of Christian theology. It follows as a necessary consequence that the study of the Bible, as taught in the department of Biblical Literature, must be the foundation of all right theological education.’ This new Chair of Biblical Theology seems to me to realize the sentiment embodied in this quotation, in a form which, if he were now present with us, would receive his benediction. It embalms his memory indissolubly with the life of this Seminary, and will ever be an inspiration to its students in their ‘search of the Scriptures.’

“In regard to the incumbent of this Chair, I avail of the courtesy of the Board to express my wish that it may be one who sat as a pupil at the feet of that eminent teacher, and I regard it as a felicity to the Seminary that there is one here who has been trained within its walls, and who, by his ripe scholarship and purity of character in Christian faith and practice, has won the confidence and affection of his associate Professors, of

this Board of Directors, and of the students who have come under his teaching during these years of faithful and devoted service.

“From what I have said, you will anticipate that my wishes will be fully gratified in the appointment of the Rev. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., as eminently qualified to fill this Chair. In this expression of preference, it gives me the greatest pleasure to say that I do but voice the views and wishes of our late revered President of the Faculty, Roswell D. Hitchcock. Dr. Briggs was his choice for this Chair.

“I cannot doubt that the highest interests of this Seminary, and, what is more, those of the Redeemer’s kingdom on earth, will be promoted by this realization of the plans of these two Christian scholars, both as regards the foundation of the Chair and the selection of the suggested incumbent.”

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE INCUMBENT.

At the conclusion of President Butler’s address, Henry Day, Esq., offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted :

Resolved, That Professor Charles A. Briggs, D.D., be transferred from the Davenport Professorship of Hebrew and the Cognate Languages to the Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology.

Professor Briggs, having been duly advised of the action above recorded, addressed a communication to the Board, under date of January 7, 1891, accepting the new Chair to which he had been transferred.

120 WEST 93D ST., NEW YORK,
January 7, 1891.

*Gentlemen of the Board of Directors of the Union
Theological Seminary, New York :*

I thank you for the mark of confidence expressed in your choice of me to fill the Edward Robinson Professorship of Biblical Theology. There is no Chair that so well suits my tastes and my studies for the past twenty-five years. Under the advice of the Faculty, I have been building up the department of Biblical Theology for some years past. But I had reached the limit of new work. I could not advance further until relieved of the Hebrew work. In accepting the new Chair, I propose to push the work of the department rapidly forward, and to cover the whole ground of the Chair at as early a date as possible. I give over the work of the Hebrew Chair to my pupil, colleague, and friend, Dr. Brown, with confidence, that building on the foundations I have laid, he will make marked improvement upon my work.

Biblical Theology is, at the present time, the vantage ground for the solution of those important problems in religion, doctrine, and morals that are compelling the attention of the men of our times. The Bible is the Word of God, and its authority is divine authority that determines the faith and life of men. Biblical scholars have been long held in bondage to ecclesiasticism and dogmatism. But modern Biblical criticism has won the battle of freedom. The accumulations of long periods of traditional speculation and dogmatism have been in large measure removed, and the Bible itself stands before the men of our time in a commanding position, such as it never has enjoyed before. On all sides it is asked, not

what do the creeds teach, what do the theologians say, what is the authority of the Church, but what does the Bible itself teach us? It is the office of Biblical Theology to answer this question. It is the culmination of the work of Exegesis. It rises on a complete induction through all the departments of Biblical study to a comprehensive grasp of the Bible as a whole, in the unity and variety of the sum of its teaching. It draws the line with the teaching of the Bible. It fences off from the Scriptures all the speculations, all the dogmatic elaborations, all the doctrinal adaptations that have been made in the history of doctrine in the Church. It does not deny their propriety and importance, but it insists upon the three-fold distinction as necessary to truth and theological honesty, that the theology of the Bible is one thing, the only infallible authority; the theology of the creeds is another thing, having simply ecclesiastical authority; and the theology of the theologians, or Dogmatic Theology, is a third thing, which has no more authority than any other system of human construction. It is well known that until quite recent times, and even at present in some quarters, the creeds have lorded it over the Scriptures, and the dogmaticians have lorded it over the creeds, so that in its last analysis the authority in the Church has been, too often, the authority of certain theologians. Now, Biblical Theology aims to limit itself strictly to the theology of the Bible itself. Biblical theologians are fallible men, and doubtless it is true, that they err in their interpretation of the Scriptures, as have others; but it is the aim of the discipline to give the theology of the Bible pure and simple; and the inductive and historical methods that determine the working of the department are certainly favorable to an objective presentation of the

subject, and are unfavorable to the intrusion of subjective fancies and circumstantial considerations. It will be my aim, so long as I remain in the chair, to accomplish this ideal as far as possible. Without fear or favor I shall teach the truth of God's Word as I find it. The theology of the Bible is much simpler, richer, and grander than any of the creeds or dogmatic systems. These have been built upon select portions of the Bible, and there is a capriciousness of selection in them all. But Biblical Theology makes no selection of texts—it uses the entire Bible in all its passages, and in every single passage, giving each its place and importance in the unfolding of divine revelation. To Biblical Theology the Bible is a mine of untold wealth; treasures, new and old, are in its storehouses; all its avenues lead, in one way or another, to the presence of the living God and the divine Saviour.

The work of Biblical Theology is conducted on such a comprehensive study of the Bible, that while the Professor builds upon a thorough study of the original texts, his class must use their English Bibles. A thorough study of the English Bible is necessarily included in the course. If the plan of the work is carried out, the student will accompany his Professor through the entire English Bible during his Seminary course, and will be taught to expound a large number of the most important passages in the light of all the passages leading up to them.

In conclusion, allow me to express my gratitude to the venerable President of the Board of Directors for the interest he has ever taken in my work, for the honor he has shown me in nominating me for the Chair he so generously founded, and for attaching to the Chair, with such modesty and consideration, the name

of Edward Robinson, my honored teacher, the greatest name on the roll of Biblical scholars of America, and the most widely known and honored of her professors. I shall regard it as my high calling and privilege to build on his foundations, and to advance the work that he carried on as far as it can be advanced in the circumstances of our time. The names of Edward Robinson and Charles Butler will be entwined into a bond of double strength to sustain me in the delicate and difficult work that I now undertake to do.

Faithfully,

C. A. BRIGGS.

Arrangements were made for the inauguration of Dr. Briggs on Tuesday evening, the 20th of January. The Reverend David R. Frazer, D.D., was appointed to deliver the charge on behalf of the Board of Directors.

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II.

THE INAUGURATION.

TUESDAY EVENING, Jan. 20, 1891.

President Charles Butler, LL.D., presided. After devotional exercises, at the request of Mr. Butler, the President of the Faculty made a brief preliminary statement, as follows:

"As has been announced, last May the President of the Board of Directors of the Union Theological Seminary, Charles Butler, LL.D., provided for the endowment of a new Chair in the sum of \$100,000.

"On the basis of this munificent gift, at the recent meeting of the Board, the new Professorship was formally established, to be known, in accordance with the request of President Butler, as *The Edward Robinson Professorship of Biblical Theology*. This was designed by Mr. Butler to be a memorial of his long-time friend, the late Edward Robinson, D.D., LL.D., the first Professor of Sacred Literature in this institution, who honored that Chair and this Seminary by his long and distinguished service from 1837 to 1863.

"The President of the Board suggested that it would be in accord with his own wishes and with those of his friend, the late President Roswell D. Hitchcock, D.D., LL.D., if the Board should transfer the Rev. Professor Charles A. Briggs, D.D., to the new Chair just established. By a unanimous vote the Board at once adopted the suggestion of their President, and transferred

Professor Briggs from the '*Davenport Chair of Hebrew and the Cognate Languages*' to the '*Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology*.' Dr. Briggs, having signified his acceptance of this transfer, his inauguration will now take place."

President Butler addressed Professor Briggs as follows:

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, and in accordance with the constitution of the 'Union Theological Seminary in the city of New York,' I call upon you to '*make and subscribe*' the '*declaration*' required of each member of the Faculty of this institution."

Thereupon Professor Briggs made the '*declaration*' as follows:

"I believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and I do now, in the presence of God and the Directors of this Seminary, solemnly and sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures. I do also, in like manner, approve of the Presbyterian Form of Government; and I do solemnly promise that I will not teach or inculcate anything which shall appear to me to be subversive of the said system of doctrines, or of the principles of said Form of Government, so long as I shall continue to be a Professor in the Seminary."

Thereupon, President Butler said:

"In the name of the Board of Directors, I declare that Professor Charles A. Briggs, D.D., is inaugurated as the Incumbent of the *Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology*.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Charge to Professor Briggs will now be delivered by the member

of the Board duly appointed for this service,—the Rev. David R. Frazer, D.D., the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Newark, N. J.”

THE CHARGE.

MY DEAR BROTHER BRIGGS:

Before attempting to discharge the duty which, by your kind consideration, has been devolved upon me, permit me to tender my heartfelt congratulations: First, upon the establishment of the Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology; a consummation so devoutly wished for alike by yourself and by our revered Hitchcock. We all share in your joy and recognize the new departure as a long and a right step in advance in the history of our Institution.

In the orderings of God's providence every age has its own peculiar problem to solve, the solution being wrought out from the standpoint of its own pressing needs. It is a marked characteristic of our day that the Bible is now studied as never before in the world's history, and the establishment of this new department is in the line of this development and is answerable to this modern demand. For, if I understand aright the function of Biblical Theology, it does not conduct a simple, grammatical exercise; it does not discuss the various textual readings; it does not study the opinions of the Fathers or the deliverances of the Church; it does not formulate a body of systematic divinity grouped about some chosen central principle. These are important and legitimate topics of study, hence are properly cared for in our curriculum. They will doubtless be very helpful as external aids in the prosecution of the work of this Chair, but the peculiar province of

Biblical Theology is to study the Word ; to determine what God intends to say in His Word, and then to formulate these hallowed teachings.

Such being its province, I need not pause to show that Biblical Theology is the normal response to that modern critical spirit which refuses to accept anything upon the basis of authority and insists upon tracing everything back to its genetic principle and its efficient cause. Neither need I tarry to discriminate sharply and accurately between the functions of Biblical and Systematic Theology. If you, my dear brother, have any especial interest in, or desire for information on this general subject, I would respectfully refer you to a work on "Biblical Study," which is published by the Scribners, and was written by one who has served long and well in, and has just been transferred from "the Davenport Professorship of Hebrew and the Cognate Languages" in this Institution ; and, if you are not acquainted with the work, I can assure you that the time spent in its perusal will not be wasted, for you will find therein an admirable and exhaustive discussion of the subject.

But I want to congratulate you, secondly, upon the fact that *you* are to be the incumbent of the new Chair, a position for which you are pre-eminently qualified by reason of the peculiar character of your past studies. I am very well aware, that you would much prefer to have me discuss the general topic of Biblical Theology, and to dwell upon the claims it has to a place in our curriculum, rather than to hint the name of, or make any reference to the Professor who is to occupy the new Chair. But if anything of a personal character should be said, please remember, my brother, you have no one to blame save yourself, since, passing by abler

men, you have kindly insisted that your old friend and classmate should deliver the Charge, as you enter upon the awful responsibilities of your new position. And as the class spirit asserts itself, I will say, despite your unspoken protest, that the class of '64 is proud of its representative; that it rejoices in your well-deserved success, and that it appropriates to itself a peculiar glory by virtue of the events of this hour. Little did we dream, when we sat at the feet of that honored man whose name gives dignity to your new Chair, as also at the feet of those other scholarly and godly men, Henry B. Smith, Thomas H. Skinner, Roswell D. Hitchcock, and Henry H. Hadley, men whose presence was a benediction, whose instruction was an inspiration, whose memories are revered and hallowed, that there was among us, going in and out just as we went in and out, one who was destined to sit in Gamaliel's seat and to honor the exalted position by his scholarly attainments. Yet such was the fact, and although you wish I would not say it, still, as your classmate and on behalf of the class thus signally honored, I tender you our warmest and heartiest congratulations.

And I propose saying still further, since I betray no confidence by the declaration, that it would have greatly rejoiced your heart and would have wonderfully inspired you for your work could you have heard the cordial, tender, and appreciative words with which our venerable and venerated President of the Board of Directors (who is also the kind and generous patron, through whose munificence the new Chair has been endowed, "*Serus in coelum redeas*"), placed your name, the only name placed in nomination for the position.

And I am sure you would have been more than pleased could you have witnessed the unanimity with

which the Directors ratified the nomination and transferred you from the Davenport Chair of Hebrew, to the Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology. I congratulate you that the honored and revered Founder of the department wanted *you* in the department which he founded, and also upon the fact that you enter upon your new work in the enjoyment of the fullest confidence, respect, and love of the Directors of this Seminary.

But I may not forget that this is your hour. Inasmuch as I cannot hope to impart any instruction respecting the peculiar and practical duties of your new position, I would be content to let these congratulatory words take the place of the more formal charge. In order, however, to meet the requirements of my appointment, and to stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance, I charge you :

First. To have clear, well-settled, and accurately defined views of the nature, the scope, and the design of the Holy Scriptures.

The Bible is to be your text-book, and the Bible claims to be the book of God. If this high claim cannot be maintained ; if the Bible be not the book of God, as verily as Jesus Christ is the Son of God, then is it unworthy of our confidence. That Word which was in the beginning with God and was God, and which in the fulness of time began to be flesh, was, as the Incarnate Word, the God-man, very God and very Man. We do not understand this "great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh." We do not attempt to explain it, but we accept it, we believe it, we rest our hopes of life, here and hereafter, upon it. And upon this same basis we can accept the Word written. It also is an incarnation. Great is the mystery of

Revelation, God manifesting His thought in the forms of human speech. Since holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the Divine and human elements are co-ordinated in the Word written as well as in the Word Incarnated. We must recognize the Divine and human factors in the Scriptures, and assign a legitimate place to each and to both, but I need not charge you, my dear brother, to bear in ceaseless remembrance the fact, that just in the proportion that the Divine element is eliminated or is abnormally subordinated to the human, is the authority of the Bible circumscribed and the power of the Bible abridged. You will never forget that you have GOD'S WORD for your text-book, and you will never fail to teach it as the very Word of God.

The *scope* of Biblical instruction is clearly set forth on the sacred page. Great mischief is often wrought by the notion that the Bible aims to cover the whole sphere of human knowledge, and that its authority is lessened by the concession that there are some things which can be comprehended without its aid. We surely do not need the Bible to teach us that two and two make four, or that the whole is greater than any of its parts. The Holy Word has a distinct mission and a definite aim. It does not come to us as a teacher of physics or of metaphysics, but as a revelation: as a revelation of God: as a revelation of God to man: as a revelation of God to man concerning the highest and the dearest moral interests of man, alike for time and for eternity. It comes to man, not primarily to reason, but to reveal, and to reveal those high themes, which, by necessity of being, transcend the ordinary processes of human thought. While pervaded with an air of simplicity and honesty and truthfulness, it comes not primarily

to persuade, but to command, and to command, not in view of the deductions of human reason or in the light of conclusions reached by the processes of a speculative philosophy, but upon that simple, yet sublime, basis, "Thus saith the Lord God."

The *design* of Revelation is summed up essentially in the Johannean statement, "these things are *written* that ye might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have *life* through His name." As all roads led to Rome, so all Scripture leads to Christ. The poetry, the prophecy, the precepts, the biography, the history of the Bible, find their true centrality in Him who was at once dust and Divinity, the Workman of Nazareth, the Prophet of Galilee, 'The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' The final end and ultimate design of the Holy Scriptures are "to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus"; hence it is your business, my dear brother, from the Word written to educe the Word Incarnate, and I beg you to so present Jesus Christ to all who come to you for instruction, that they may go from your class-room to their great life-work, not only impressed with an abiding sense of the matchless beauty and the mighty power of that Divine Saviour concerning whom the Scriptures so abundantly testify, but also, and as the normal outcome of your teachings, with a fixed determination "to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

But Paul forewarns "of things hard to be understood," of problems which must perplex the most acute mind and defy the grasp of the most profound intellect. Furthermore, in the interpretation of the Word, conflicting views respecting the exact significance of the revelation will arise. Who shall decide when

learned doctors disagree? To whom shall the ultimate appeal be taken? Manifestly to the Spirit of the Living God by whom the declaration was prompted, and to whom the meaning is clear; hence, I charge you,

Secondly, Seek the aid of the Holy Ghost in your arduous and responsible work.

I attempt no solution of the mooted question as to whether our Lord's promise that the Holy Ghost should lead believers in "the way of all truth," was restricted to the Apostolic College and was literally fulfilled in the written revelation, or whether it pertains to believers in all time.

But the Scriptures most clearly require that all believers should "live in the Spirit," "walk in the Spirit," "be filled with the Spirit." Christian consciousness bears witness that the abiding presence of the Spirit begets deep and vital spirituality, and Christian experience abundantly confirms the assertion that vital spirituality ensures a large insight of that truth which must be spiritually discerned. A willingness to do God's will must precede the knowledge of the doctrine, and this willingness of mind and heart must be begotten by the Holy Ghost. Put peculiar honor upon the Divine Spirit and He will put peculiar honor upon you and your work. He will open your eyes to behold the wondrous things in God's law; He will give you the witness of His presence in your own soul, and will enable you, in all meekness and humility, yet with the highest Christian positiveness, to say: I know whom and what and why I have believed, and am persuaded that my confidence rests not upon the wisdom of man, but upon the wisdom of GOD.

And as you thus teach the Word of God under the guidance of the Spirit of God; as day by day you pre-

sent the truth as it is in Jesus to those who are to preach a crucified Redeemer to dying men, may the Lord bless you and keep you ; may He equip you for duty, help you in the discharge of it, and when your great work is finished may His " Well done " be pronounced upon His " good and faithful servant."

RESPONSE OF PROFESSOR BRIGGS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

I thank you one and all for your presence here to-night to do honor to the venerable President of the Board of Directors of this Seminary, who has been identified with this institution from its foundation, and who has crowned a life of Christian philanthropy by the endowment of a Chair of Biblical Theology in memory of the greatest Biblical scholar our country has produced.

Our Saviour tells us that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and we know that your heart, honored Sir, is the happiest on this occasion. You have enshrined your name with the name of Edward Robinson in a Professor's Chair which in all time to come will teach the theology of the Bible, and train thousands of students in that Word of God, which is to be the joy of their own hearts and the glad tidings of redemption to the world. You have so fully endowed this Chair that you alone will sustain it in time to come, and have the entire credit with every successive professor and student for that financial support without which the work of grace cannot be conducted in this world. Your influence will go with these heralds of salvation to the ends of the earth, and as each in his turn shall tread the highway to the heavenly city, he will fill your heart with joy in recounting what God has wrought through

him and through you. You have laid up a treasure in heaven that is secured to you through all the ages of eternity. You have not waited, as so many do, for the dying hour to make your bequest. You make it in your lifetime, while you may rejoice in its accomplishment.

I thank you for the great kindness you have done me in naming me as your choice for the Chair of your foundation. No one could have done me more honor. You could not have bestowed upon me a greater benefaction than in making me the first Professor in a Chair whose work so exactly corresponds with my ideals of christian service, and which bears the name of a teacher whose memory is one of my most sacred associations.

Edward Robinson was the pupil of Moses Stuart, the father of Biblical learning in America.

He carried on the work of Biblical scholarship and laid the foundations upon which all recent scholars are building. His Lexicons of the languages of the Old Testament and the New Testament are in the hands of most theological students and ministers, and in new editions, that are in course of preparation, will be the help of future generations. His "Harmony of the Gospels," in revised editions, still holds its place as the best of Harmonies. His exploration of Palestine made him the father of modern Biblical Geography. His mind was sound and clear, his judgment firm and solid, his perceptions keen and searching. If he had a fault it was in his dislike of traditionalism. He was a man of truth and deeds. He could not endure shams of any kind. He was an explorer and a builder. He rose on the heights of the best Biblical learning, and he taught his students to go forward. He appropriated the best treas-

ures of German learning, and held his ground against every suspicion of rationalism. As a professor in Union Theological Seminary he was a great teacher. As the Secretary of its Faculty for many years he was a great disciplinarian. He was the first librarian, to whom we owe the organization of our great library. It has been my honor to be one of his successors as Librarian, as Secretary and in the Hebrew Chair, and everywhere I have been under the spell of his influence. Edward Robinson knew and appreciated the discipline of Biblical Theology, which in his day was getting a foothold in the German universities—but he was obliged, by the poverty of Union Seminary, to do all the work of the Biblical department, with a single tutor. Like a wise master, he gave his strength to the foundations. Owing to the benefaction of James Brown, the Biblical department was organized in two chairs; but long after Robinson's death. Then to this was added a temporary Professor in the department of Biblical Philology. Now the chair of Biblical Theology has been established, and the Biblical department of Union Theological Seminary rises to the height of Edward Robinson's ideal. Can we doubt—to use your own words, Mr. President—that his benediction is upon us on this occasion?

It was my privilege, as a student of Union Seminary, to have as teachers the best Faculty in the world: Thomas H. Skinner, Edward Robinson, Henry B. Smith, Roswell D. Hitchcock, and Henry Hadley. I think that I know these men and that their hearts are with us, their successors.

It is proper that I should briefly allude to our late President, Roswell D. Hitchcock, my teacher and then my friend. He knew the value of Biblical Theology. In his lectures on Biblical History he introduced it into

his course so far as possible as one of its sections, but he saw that the field was too vast, and longed for the time when this Chair should be endowed. Dr. Hitchcock was one of the prophets of his time. He had marvellous foresight and insight. He saw that the revision movement was coming, and that a transformation of theology was necessary. He prepared his students for the day and the work. He has left us little in book form, but his volume of Sermons is worth a hundred books of other men, and his influence and name will endure as long as the sun and the moon, to all generations.

It is a happy feature of this occasion that my dear brother Frazer, whom I learned to value and to love, in the class rooms of the Seminary, represents the Board of Directors in giving me their Charge. I could be sure of his confidence as entwined in the memory of youthful study and affection. I thank him for the expression of it again to-night. To you, gentlemen of the Board of Directors, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks. Your unanimous choice of me to this position in all the circumstances of the case is a renewed token of those pleasant relations that have never been disturbed since first you welcomed me, a young and inexperienced teacher, into the ranks of the faculty. I can only say that, so far as I know myself, I am loyal to you, to the faculty, to my teachers, and to the founders and the benefactors of this institution.

In advancing into the fields of Biblical Theology it is a great comfort to me that you have chosen as my successor in the Hebrew Chair one, a pupil, who knows my work, and will carry it on—a friend, who has been for many years as my right arm, who will do the work better than I have done it, and who has the courage

to go forward and build higher. The only difficulty I had in the way of accepting the chair, was lest too much work would be imposed upon him by the assumption of new work in addition to the old. I cannot refrain from expressing my thanks to my dear friend, David H. McAlpin, that he has removed this difficulty out of our way, and in addition to numerous acts of kindness, which seem as natural to him as life and breath, he has furnished the means to sustain a tutorial assistant to Dr. Brown for two years in the hope that ere that time shall elapse some kind friend may be glad to add another name to the benefactors of this institution, and follow the example set by our honored President.

It may not be out of place for me to say that Union Theological Seminary is not a wealthy institution. We need at least half a million dollars to make us comfortable.

It is impossible for the gentlemen of our Board of Directors to do all that the Seminary requires. They are one and all doing nobly. Some of them are straining their resources to sustain this institution and exalt it.

God has blessed us in the past ; we are rejoicing in His blessing to-night. I doubt not there are in this audience and in this city numerous friends, who will bless us and bless themselves in the eternities with the ample supply that they will furnish for all the needs of this institution, that it may be a centre of evangelism for this metropolis, for the nation, and for the world.

III.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

THE AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

The theme for my discourse to-night has sprung out of the necessities of the situation. It seems to be my duty to set forth my views fully and frankly with reference to those fundamental questions of our times that underlie the discipline of Biblical Theology. Accordingly, I have chosen that upon which everything depends—the Authority of Holy Scripture.

Human nature is so constituted that, when self-consciousness and reflection rise into activity, there is an irresistible impulse to seek authority for the relations in which we find ourselves, the knowledge that is taught us and the conduct prescribed for us in life. We may be content as children with the authority of our parents, as young men and maidens with the authority of masters and teachers, but, sooner or later, the responsibility is thrown upon ourselves, and we alone must bear the strain of life, incur its obligations, and earn its rewards and penalties for time and for eternity. What authority shall be our guide and comfort in life is a fundamental question for man at all times, but never has it been so urged upon our race as in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

If we undertake to search the forms of authority that exist about us, they all alike disclose themselves as human and imperfect, and we feel at times as if we were upon

an unknown sea, with pilots and officers in whom we have no confidence. The earnest spirit presses back of all these human authorities in quest of an infallible guide and of an eternal and immutable certainty. Probability might be the guide of life in the superficial eighteenth century, and for those who have inherited its traditions, but the men of the present times are in quest of certainty. Divine authority is the only authority to which man can yield implicit obedience, on which he can rest in loving certainty and build with joyous confidence.

The progress of criticism in our day has so undermined and destroyed the pillars of authority upon which former generations were wont to rest that agnosticism seems to many minds the inevitable result of scientific investigation. We cannot know God, we cannot be certain with regard to ultimate realities. Man cannot rise to the throne of the Deity. He cannot see the Invisible or know the transcendent. Unless God in some way enter within the region of human knowledge, we cannot know Him. But if God be God, if He be the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, if He has made it and governs it with a holy purpose, He may not only transcend universal nature by reigning over it, but He may enter into it, inhabit it, and pervade it with His immanence. He may disclose His presence in forms that men may be able to discern.

I.—THE SOURCES OF DIVINE AUTHORITY.

It is the testimony of human experience in all ages that God manifests Himself to men and gives certainty of His presence and authority. There are historically three great fountains of divine authority—the Bible, the Church, and the Reason.

(1.) *The Authority of the Church.*—The majority of Christians from the apostolic age have found God through the Church. Martyrs and saints, fathers and schoolmen, the profoundest intellects, the saintliest lives, have had this experience. Institutional Christianity has been to them the presence-chamber of God. They have therein and thereby entered into communion with all saints. It is difficult for many Protestants to regard this experience as any other than pious illusion and delusion. But what shall we say of a modern like Newman, who could not reach certainty, striving never so hard, through the Bible or the Reason, but who did find divine authority in the institutions of the Church? * Shall we deny it because it may be beyond our experience? If we have not seen God in institutional Christianity, it is because the Church and its institutions have so enveloped themselves to us with human conceits and follies. Divine authority has been so encased in the authority of popes and councils, prelates and priests, ecclesiastics and theologians, that multitudes have been unable to discern it; and these mediators of redemption have so obtruded themselves in the way of devout seekers after God that they could not find God. Plain, common people have not been offended so much by this state of things, because they

* "From the time that I became a Catholic, of course I have no further history of my religious opinions to narrate. In saying this, I do not mean to say that my mind has been idle, or that I have given up thinking on theological subjects; but that I have had no changes to record, and have had no anxiety of heart whatever. I have been in perfect peace and contentment. I never have had one doubt. I was not conscious to myself, on my conversion, of any difference of thought or of temper from what I had before. I was not conscious of firmer faith in the fundamental truths of revelation or of more self-command; I had not more fervor; but it was like coming into port after a rough sea; and my happiness on that score remains to this day without interruption."—Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, p. 264.

are accustomed in all denominations to identify the authority of God with the authority of priest and pastor, as a child identifies the authority of the parent with the authority of God ; and men of deep spiritual insight may be able to force their way through these obstructions, and find God in spite of them. But to men of the temperament and environment of the average educated Protestant such an experience is difficult, if not impossible. Nevertheless, the Church is a seat of divine authority, and the multitudes of pious souls in the present and the past have not been mistaken in their experience when they have found God in the Church.

(2.) *The Authority of the Reason.*—Another means used by God to make Himself known is the forms of the Reason, using Reason in a broad sense to embrace the metaphysical categories, the conscience and the religious feeling. Here, in the Holy of Holies of human nature, God presents Himself to those who seek Him. The vast multitude of men are guided by God through the forms of the Reason, without their having any consciousness of His presence or guidance. There are few who are able to rise by reflection into the higher consciousness of God. These few are of the mystic type of religion ; the men who have been the prophets of mankind, the founders of religions, the leaders of Revivals and Reformations, who, conscious of the divine presence within them, and certain of His guidance, lead on confidently in the paths of divine Providence. Such men have appeared in all ages of the world. Some of them have been the leaders of thought in modern times in Great Britain, Germany, and America. We ought not to be surprised that they should depreciate the Bible and the Church as merely external modes of find-

ing God, for even the prophets of the Bible attach little importance to the institutions of Israel, and seldom mention them, except to warn against their misuse.*

It may be that these modern thinkers have a divine calling to withdraw men from mere priestcraft, ceremonialism, dead orthodoxy and ecclesiasticism, and concentrate their attention on the essentials of the Christian religion.

Martineau could not find divine authority in the Church or the Bible, but he did find God enthroned in his own soul.† There are those who would refuse these Rationalists a place in the company of the faithful. But they forget that the essential thing is to find God and divine certainty, and if these men have found God without the mediation of Church and Bible, Church and Bible are means and not ends; they are avenues to God, but are not God. We regret that these Rationalists depreciate the means of grace so essential to most of us, but we are warned lest we commit a similar error, and depreciate the Reason and the Christian consciousness.

* 1 Sam. xv. 22-23; Is. i. 10-17; Jer. vii. 22-26; Mic. vi. 6-8.

† "Divine guidance has never and nowhere failed to men; nor has it ever, in the most essential things, largely differed amongst them; but it has not always been recognized as divine, much less as the living contact of Spirit with spirit—the communion of affection between God and man. While conscience remained an *impersonal law*, stern and silent, with only a jealous Nemesis behind, man had to stand up alone, and work out for himself his independent magnanimity; and he could only be the pagan hero. When conscience was found to be inseparably blended with the Holy Spirit, and to speak in tones immediately divine, it became the very shrine of worship—its strife, its repentance, its aspirations, passed into the incidents of a living drama, with its crises of alienation and reconciliation; and the cold obedience to a mysterious necessity was exchanged for the *allegiance of personal affection*. And this is the true emergence from the darkness of ethical law to the tender light of the life divine. The veil falls from the shadowed face of moral authority, and the directing love of the all-holy God shines forth." — Martineau's *Seat of Authority in Religion*, p. 75.

(3.) *The Authority of Holy Scripture.*—We have examined the Church and the Reason as seats of divine authority in an introduction to our theme, the *Authority of the Scriptures*, because they open our eyes to see mistakes that are common to the three departments. Protestant Christianity builds its faith and life on the divine authority contained in the Scriptures, and too often depreciates the Church and the Reason. Spurgeon is an example of the average modern Evangelical, who holds the Protestant position, and assails the Church and Reason in the interest of the authority of Scripture. But the average opinion of the Christian world would not assign him a higher place in the kingdom of God than Martineau or Newman. May we not conclude, on the whole, that these three representative Christians of our time, living in or near the world's metropolis, have, each in his way, found God and rested on divine authority? May we not learn from them not to depreciate any of the means whereby God makes Himself known to men? Men are influenced by their temperaments and environments which of the three ways of access to God they may pursue. There are obstructions thrown up by the folly of men in each one of these avenues, and it is our duty as servants of the living God, to remove the stumbling-block out of the way of all earnest seekers after God, in the avenues most familiar to us.

No one of these ways has been so obstructed as the Holy Bible. The ancient Jews made a fence about the law, and enclosed it with circle upon circle of traditional interpretation, so that the law itself was hidden out of sight, the external circle of interpretation having taken its place, and the authority of God was obscured by the authority of man. The Christian

Church pursued the same method, and concealed the Word of God behind the authority of popes and councils, fathers and schoolmen. The Reformers brought the Bible from its obscurity for a season, but their successors, the scholastics and ecclesiastics of Protestantism, pursued the old error and enveloped the Bible with creeds and ecclesiastical decisions, and dogmatic systems, and substituted for the authority of God the authority of a Protestant rule of faith. The Bible has been treated as if it were a baby, to be wrapped in swaddling-clothes, nursed, and carefully guarded, lest it should be injured by heretics and skeptics. It has been shut up in a fortress, and surrounded by breastworks and fortifications as extensive as those that envelope Cologne and Strasburg. No one can get at the Bible unless he force his way through these breastworks of traditional dogmatism, and storm the barriers of ecclesiasticism.

II.—THE BARRIERS OF DIVINE AUTHORITY IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.

The Bible is the book of God, the greatest treasure of the Church. Its ministry are messengers to preach the Word of God, and to invite men to His presence and government. It is pharisaic to obstruct their way by any fences or stumbling-blocks whatever. It is a sin against the divine majesty to prop up divine authority by human authority, however great or extensive. The sun is shining in noontide splendor. Lest men, by looking at it, should quench the light of the great luminary, let us build walls so high that they cannot see the sun, and let us guard its light by reflecting mirrors. The grace of God is the true elixir of life to all mankind. Lest indiscriminate use of it should vitiate

its powers, let us dilute it in several degrees, so that it may not come to men directly, but only through a succession of safe hands. How absurd, you say. And yet this is the way men have been dealing with the Bible, shutting out the light of God, obstructing the life of God, and fencing in the authority of God.

(1.) *Superstition*.—The first barrier that obstructs the way to the Bible is *superstition*. We are accustomed to attach superstition to the Roman Catholic Mariolatry, Hagiolatry, and the use of images and pictures and other external things in worship. But superstition is no less superstition if it take the form of *Bibliolatry*. It may be all the worse if it concentrate itself on this one thing. But the Bible has no magical virtue in it, and there is no halo enclosing it. It will not stop a bullet any better than a mass-book. It will not keep off evil spirits any better than a cross. It will not guard a home from fire half so well as holy water. If you desire to know when and how you should take a journey, you will find a safer guide in an almanac or a daily newspaper. The Bible is no better than hydromancy or witchcraft, if we seek for divine guidance by the chance opening of the Book.* The Bible, as a book, is paper, print, and binding,—nothing more. It is enti-

* I am far from any disposition to treat with disrespect the religious convictions of pious Roman Catholics or Protestants. Roman Catholic divines recognize that there are superstitious uses of the mass-book, the cross, and holy water that are not justified by Roman Catholic doctrine and usage. My argument is against those Protestants who exhibit the same superstition toward the Bible as some Roman Catholics show in the ceremonies of their religion. Superstition is just as bad in the one as in the other. The only difference is in the forms of its manifestation. In my experience, those who make the loudest outcry against Roman Catholic superstition are the very ones who are most guilty of the superstition I am condemning in Protestantism. The criticisms that have been made upon this address, especially in religious journals noted for their hostility to Roman Catholicism, show that Bibliolatry is more prevalent in Protestantism than I had supposed.

tled to reverent handling for the sake of its holy contents, because it contains the divine word of redemption for man, and not for any other reason whatever.

(2.) *Verbal Inspiration*.—The second barrier, keeping men from the Bible, is the dogma of *verbal inspiration*. The Bible in use in our churches and homes is an English Bible. Upon the English Bible our religious life is founded. But the English Bible is a translation from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek originals. It is claimed for these originals by modern dogmaticians that they are verbally inspired. No such claim is found in the Bible itself, or in any of the creeds of Christendom. And yet it has been urged by the common opinion of modern evangelicalism that there can be no inspiration without *verbal inspiration*.* But a study of the original languages of the Bible finds that they are languages admirably fitted by divine Providence for their purpose,† but still, languages developing in the same way essentially as other human languages. The text of the Bible, in which these languages have been handed down, has shared the fortunes of other texts of other literature.

We find there are errors of transmission. There is nothing divine in the text,—in its letters, words, or clauses.‡ There are those who hold that thought and language are as inseparable as body and soul. But language is rather the dress of thought. A master of many languages readily clothes the same thought in half a dozen different languages. The same thought in the Bible itself is dressed in different literary styles, and the thought of the one is as authoritative as the other. The divine authority is not in the style or in

* Briggs' *Whither*, pp. 64 *seq.* Charles Scribner's Sons.

† Briggs' *Biblical Study*, pp. 42 *seq.* Charles Scribner's Sons.

‡ *Biblical Study*, pp. 156 *seq.*

the words, but in the concept, and so the divine power of the Bible may be transferred into any human language.* The divine authority contained in the Scriptures speaks as powerfully in English as in Greek, in Choctaw as in Aramaic, in Chinese as in Hebrew. We force our way through the language and the letter, the grammar and the style, to the inner substance of the thought, for there, if at all, we shall find God.

(3.) *Authenticity*.—The third barrier is the *authenticity of the Scriptures*. The only authenticity we are concerned about in seeking for the divine authority of the Scriptures is *divine authenticity*,† and yet many theologians have insisted that we must prove that the Scriptures were written by or under the superintendence of prophets and apostles.‡ Refusing to build on the authority of the living Church, they have sought an authority in the dead Church; abandoning the authority of institutional Christianity, they have sought a prop in floating traditions. These traditions assign authors to all the books of the Bible, and on the authority of these human authors, it is claimed that the Bible is divine. These theologians seem altogether unconscious of the circle of reasoning they are making. They prove the authority of the Bible from the authority of its authors. But what do we know of the authors apart from the Bible itself? Apart from the sacred writings,—Moses and David, Paul and Peter, would be no more to us than Confucius or Sakya Muni. They were leaders of men, but how do we know that they were called of God to speak divine words to us? The only way in which we can prove their authority is from their writings, and yet we are asked to accept the authority of the writings on the authority of these authors. When

* *Whither*, p. 66. † *Biblical Study*, pp. 220 *seq.* ‡ *Whither*, pp. 81 *seq.*

such fallacies are thrust in the faces of men seeking divine authority in the Bible, is it strange that so many turn away in disgust? It is just here that the Higher Criticism has proved such a terror in our times. Traditionalists are crying out that it is destroying the Bible, because it is exposing their fallacies and follies. It may be regarded as the certain result of the science of the Higher Criticism that Moses did not write the Pentateuch or Job; Ezra did not write the Chronicles, Ezra, or Nehemiah; Jeremiah did not write the Kings or Lamentations; David did not write the Psalter, but only a few of the Psalms; Solomon did not write the Song of Songs or Ecclesiastes, and only a portion of the Proverbs; Isaiah did not write half of the book that bears his name. The great mass of the Old Testament was written by authors whose names or connection with their writings are lost in oblivion.* If this is destroying the Bible, the Bible is destroyed already. But who tells us that these traditional names were the authors of the Bible? The Bible itself? The creeds of the Church? Any reliable historical testimony? None of these! Pure, conjectural tradition! Nothing more! We are not prepared to build our faith for time and eternity upon such uncertainties as these. We desire to know whether the Bible came from God, and it is not of any great importance that we should know the names of those worthies chosen by God to mediate His revelation. It is possible that there is a providential purpose in the withholding of these names, in order that men might have no excuse for building on human authority, and so should be forced to resort to divine authority. It will ere long become clear to the Christian people that the Higher Criticism has rendered an

* *Biblical Study*, pp. 222 seq.

inestimable service to this generation and to the generations to come. What has been destroyed has been the fallacies and conceits of theologians; the obstructions that have barred the way of literary men from the Bible. Higher Criticism has forced its way into the Bible itself and brought us face to face with the holy contents, so that we may see and know whether they are divine or not. Higher Criticism has not contravened any decision of any Christian council, or any creed of any Church, or any statement of Scripture itself. It has rather brought the long-neglected statement of the Westminster Confession into prominence:

"The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the word of God." *

Luther, with keen spiritual insight, once said:

"What does not teach Christ, that is not apostolic, even if St. Peter or St. Paul taught it: again, what preaches Christ that would be apostolic, even if Judas, Annas, Pilate, and Herod did it." †

It used to be the fashion to apologize for this word of Luther; but here, as elsewhere, Luther was truer to the Gospel than modern theologians.

(4.) *Inerrancy*.—The fourth barrier set up by theologians to keep men away from the Bible is the dogma of the inerrancy of Scripture. This barrier confronts Historical Criticism. It is not a pleasant task to point out errors in the sacred Scriptures. Nevertheless Historical Criticism finds them, and we must meet the issue

* Confess. of Faith, I. 4.

† Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, II. 256; Walch. xiv., p. 149.

whether they destroy the authority of the Bible or not. It has been taught in recent years, and is still taught by some theologians, that one proved error destroys the authority of Scripture.* I shall venture to affirm that, so far as I can see, there are errors in the Scriptures that no one has been able to explain away ; and the theory that they were not in the original text is sheer assumption, upon which no mind can rest with certainty.† If such errors destroy the authority of the Bible, it is already destroyed for historians. Men cannot shut their eyes to truth and fact. But on what authority do these theologians drive men from the Bible by this theory of inerrancy? The Bible itself nowhere makes this claim. The creeds of the Church nowhere sanction it. It is a ghost of modern evangelicalism to frighten children. The Bible has maintained its authority with the best scholars of our time, who with open minds have been willing to recognize any error that might be pointed out by Historical Criticism ; ‡ for these errors are all in the circumstantialia and not in the essentials ; they are in the human setting, not in the precious jewel itself ; they are found in that section of the Bible that theologians commonly account for from the providential superintendence of the mind of the author, as distinguished from divine revelation itself. It may be that this providential superintendence gives infallible guidance in every particular ; and it may be that it differs but little, if at all, from the providential superintendence of the fathers and schoolmen and theologians of the Christian Church. It is not important for our purpose that we should decide this question. If we should

* *Biblical Study*, pp. 240 seq. ; *Whither*, pp. 68 seq. † *Whither*, p. 72.

‡ G. P. Fisher, *Nature and Method of Revelation*, p. 206 seq. ; Charles Gore, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 354 seq. ; W. Sanday, *Oracles of God*, pp. 15 seq.

abandon the whole field of providential superintendence so far as inspiration and divine authority are concerned and limit divine inspiration and authority to the essential contents of the Bible, to its religion, faith, and morals, we would still have ample room to seek divine authority where alone it is essential, or even important, in the teaching that guides our devotions, our thinking, and our conduct. Whether divine authority extends to the circumstantial^s of this divine teaching or not, it is unwise and it is unchristian to force men to accept the divine authority of the Bible or reject it, on the question of its inerrancy in the circumstantial^s and the details of every passage.*

(5.) *Violation of the Laws of Nature.*—The fifth objection to the Bible has been thrown up in front of modern science. It is the claim that the *miracles* disturb, or violate, the laws of nature and the harmony of the universe; and so the miracles of the Bible have become to men of science sufficient evidence that the Bible is no more than other sacred books of other religions.† But the theories of miracles that have been taught in the Christian Church are human inventions for which the Scriptures and the Church have no responsibility whatever.

The miracles of the Bible are confined to the life of Christ and His apostles and to the ministry of Moses, Elijah, and Elisha, with very few exceptions. The Biblical writers do not lay so much stress upon them as modern apologists. Moses and Jesus both warn their disciples against miracles that would be wrought in the interest of false prophets and false messiahs.‡ The tests that they gave to discriminate the

* *Whither*, p. 73.

† *Whither*, pp. 279 *seq.*

‡ Deut. xiii. 1-5; Matth. xxiv. 24-28; 2 Thess. ii. 8-12.

true from the false were not their marvellous character, their violation of the laws of nature, their suspension of the uniformity of law, or the comprehension of extraordinary laws with ordinary laws in higher laws—nothing of the kind; but the simple test whether they set forth the holy character and the gracious teaching of God and His Messiah. The miracles of the Bible are miracles of redemption. They exhibit the love of God and the compassion of the Messiah for the needy, the suffering and the lost.* These divine features of Biblical miracles have been obscured by the apologists, who have unduly emphasized their material forms. The miracles of the Bible were the work of God either by direct divine energy or mediately through holy men, energized to perform them; but there is no reason why we should claim that they in any way violate the laws of nature or disturb its harmonies. We ought not to be disturbed by the efforts of scholars to explain them under the forms of divine law, in accordance with the order of nature. If it were possible to resolve all the miracles of the Old Testament into extraordinary acts of Divine Providence, using the forces and forms of nature in accordance with the laws of nature; and if we could explain all the miracles of Jesus, His unique authority over man and over nature, from His use of mind cure, or hypnotism, or any other occult power,—still I claim that nothing essential would be lost from the miracles of the Bible; they would still remain the most wonderful exhibition of loving purpose and redemptive acts of God and of the tenderness and grace of the Messiah's heart. Christian men may construct their theories about the miracles of the Bible with entire freedom so long as they do not deny the reality of

* A. B. Bruce, *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, pp. 258 seq.

the events themselves as recorded in Holy Scripture. The study of the miracles of the Bible has convinced me that they may be explained from the presence of God in nature, in varied forms of Theophany and Christophany, for where God is present we may expect manifestations of divine authority and power. As my friend, Dr. Bruce, recently said :

“ Miracles are not the effects of partially or wholly unknown physical causes ; they are produced by immediate divine causality. But they are not on that account lawless or unnatural. They are wrought for a worthy end, and in accordance with a wise plan. They are natural in the sense that they are congruous to the nature of God, falling within the compass of His power and subject to the direction of His wise, holy, loving will. They are natural further, I may add, in the sense that they do not wantonly interrupt or upset the order of nature, but rather put it to higher uses, which from the first it has been fitted and destined to subserve.”—Bruce’s *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, p. 66.

(6.) *Minute Prediction*.—Another barrier to the Bible has been the interpretation put upon *Predictive Prophecy*, making it a sort of history before the time, and looking anxiously for the fulfilment of the details of Biblical prediction. Kuenen has shown that if we insist upon the fulfilment of the details of the predictive prophecy of the Old Testament, many of these predictions have been reversed by history ; and the great body of the Messianic prediction has not only never been fulfilled, but cannot now be fulfilled, for the reason that its own time has passed forever.*

The Book of Jonah gives valuable suggestion here. See Jonah going to Nineveh with a prediction that in forty days Nineveh will be destroyed, and then going

* Briggs’ *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 43 *seq.* Charles Scribner’s Sons.

to a safe place outside the city, waiting with impatience for the grand sight, the destruction of the metropolis of the world. But Nineveh repents and God recalls His decree, and the city is spared. The prophet is so distressed and humiliated at the failure of his prediction that he longs for death.* Doubtless God has not fulfilled His prediction. He has recalled it. The messenger has been discredited as a predictor, but he has been accredited as the channel of the redemption from God. It may be that Nineveh will presume upon the weakness of God, His fickleness and changeableness. But at all events, God Himself takes the risk. This is not the only unfulfilled prediction in the Old Testament. God has recalled more than one of His messages of woe.† He postpones the *dies iræ* until men count Him slack in the fulfilment of His promises, and mock and jeer at His justice.‡

They know not that their salvation is involved in these recalls and postponement. God is not willing that any should perish. He rules over the world to redeem as many as possible. This makes it difficult for a hard and fast system of dogma. It troubles the apologist and disarranges his lines of defence, but it presents God Himself as the God of man, the very God that humanity craves. Jonah represents only too well the general attitude of Jew and Christian alike to the heathen world. Embedded in Jonah, unnoticed save by Zwingli and a few Anabaptists and heretics, is the gospel of infant salvation and of heathen salvation.

“Should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city; wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that

* Jonah iii.-iv.

† Is. xxxviii. ; Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 58 seq.

‡ 2 Peter iii. 3-9.

cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"*

We need no evidence that this is a divine utterance; it speaks for itself. It is clearer than a thousand detailed predictions and their fulfilment.

We have passed through these barriers that men have thrown up in front of the Word of God, the breastworks against Philosophy, History, and Science. It is not surprising that multitudes of the best men of our age have rejected a Bible thus guarded and defended, as if it could not sustain the light of day. Doubtless there are many who are thinking that the critics are destroying the Bible. They have so identified these outworks with the Bible itself that *their* Bible vanishes with these barriers. I feel deeply for them. But we have a right to assume that if these apologists are within the camp of God, they ought to have such con-

* Jonah iv. 11. I recently came upon a passage in one of the early Baptists, using this verse of Jonah in a way that was unknown to orthodox circles:

"And our Saviour Christ Luke XVIII: 16. in commendation of the condition and qualitie of Babes, saith, *Suffer the Babes to come unto me: for of such is the kingdome of Heaven.* And Matth. XVIII: 3. *Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shal not enter into the kingdome of heaven.* & Ver. 4 *whosoever therefore shal humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdome of heaven.* In all this shewing, that the children of Christ's Kingdome must be off such humble qualities and conditions as infants, & I hope none will deny, but al infants are off one quality & condition, even the infants of the Turks, our Saviour speakes off al infants generally: & evil men yet judge some infants condemned.

"And of such infants the Lord sheweth his great compasion, when he saith to the Prophet Jonah—Jonah IV: 11 . . . whereby the Lord sheweth that they had not sinned, neither were giltie off their Fathers sinnes. And wil you yet charge the Lord to condemne so manie infants and al for Adams sinne? are not your waies unequall thus to say and teach me to hold & think off God?"—Tho. Helwys. *A Short and Plaine Proof by the Word, an't workes off God that Gods decree is not the cause of anne Mans sinne or condemnation. And that all men are redeemed by Christ. As also that no Infants are condemned.* 1611, sine loco.

fidence in divine authority that nothing from without could shake them. If they have been relying on the defenses and too little upon the Bible itself, it is high time that they were forced back to the Bible. But I feel more deeply for those many men, honest and true, whom they have been keeping away from the Bible.* I would say to all such: We have undermined the breastworks of traditionalism; let us blow them to atoms. We have forced our way through the obstructions; let us remove them from the face of the earth, that no man hereafter may be kept from the Bible, but that all may freely enter in, search it through and through, and find God enthroned in its very centre.

Here in the citadel of the Bible two hosts confront the most sacred things of our religion—the one, the defenders of traditionalism, trembling for the ark of God; the other, the critics, a victorious army, determined to capture all its sacred treasures and to enjoy all its heavenly glories.

The self-constituted defenders can no longer retain a monopoly of the Word of God and exact conditions of all who would use it. It has already been taken from them by Biblical criticism, and it is open to all mankind, without conditions. Is it not their heritage? Did not Jesus and His apostles offer it to them as glad tidings of redemption to the world? Are there not treasures of grace in Holy Scripture amply sufficient for all mankind? It is the teaching of God that men

* Dr. A. B. Bruce, one of the keenest observers of the religious life of our times, says: "I certainly believe that there are many more unpolished diamonds hidden in the churchless mass of humanity than the respectable church-going part of the community has any idea of. I am even disposed to think that a great and steadily increasing portion of the moral worth of society lies outside the Church, separated from it not by godlessness, but rather by exceptionally moral earnestness. Many, in fact, have left the Church in order to be Christians."—*Kingdom of God*, p. 144.

are anxious to know; the theology of the Bible itself is what they are craving. The teaching of men and the theology of creeds and theologians no longer content them. These all have their place and importance, but they cannot take the place of the theology of the Bible and the authority of God.

III.—THE THEOLOGY OF THE BIBLE.

We are now face to face with *Biblical Theology*. Here, if anywhere, the divine authority will be found. It is my habit to divide Biblical Theology into three sections—Religion, Doctrines of Faith, and Morals. Let us look at the God of the Bible as He discloses Himself in some of these forms.

A.—THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE.

(I.) *Theophanies*.—The most prominent feature of the religion of the Bible is Theophany. Theophanies are the bases of every advance, the fountain of prophecy, the source of miracle. They guide the heroic leaders and reformers of the Old Testament religion. A permanent Theophany guides Israel from Egypt to the Holy Land, and takes possession of the Holy Tabernacle and temple as its permanent abode.*

Theophanies cluster about the Messiah at His advent, until these give place to the Christophanies, which are the great feature of the New Testament religion.

It is conceded that these Theophanies have features in common with the mythological conceptions of the ancient religions of the world, which have been rejected as mythical by historical criticism. But so soon as we compare the Theophanies of the Bible with heathen mythology, we observe striking differences.

* Briggs' *Biblical History*, pp. 16 seq. Charles Scribner's Sons.

(a) There is nothing of a polytheistic character about the Theophanies of the Bible. The one God manifests Himself to chosen men and a chosen people.

(b) The Theophanies of the Bible are not confined to ancient times, the legendary basis of the history; they pervade and control the entire history of the Bible.

(c) The mythological conceptions of the divine presence are connected with gross conceptions, in which the gods are of like passion with ourselves; but the Theophanies of the Bible are pure and holy, and ever have in view the redemption of men. God assumes the forms of light or fire, or of angel or man, in order that He may be manifest to the human senses, and assure mankind of His presence and favour.*

(d) When the doctrine of the divine transcendence was unduly emphasized, the Theophanies remained in obscurity behind the miracle and the prediction which might be wrought by the power of God from a distance, outside His universe. But now that the Immanence of God is rising into prominence, the Theophany casts the miracle and the prediction into its shadow. We now know that God is not only over all, but through all and in all. He is not far from any one of us. If we feel after Him, we may find Him. We cannot escape from His presence. If God is really present in the world, pervading it, inhabiting it, was it not a part of the divine instruction that men should be taught by visible signs to see it and know it? When He appeared to the ancients in human form, they were assured by their senses of His ability to be with them in every hour of need, and they were prepared for the conception of the great prophet of the exile: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also

* Briggs' *Biblical History*, p. 21.

that is of a contrite and humble spirit." * When God guided Israel by a pillar of cloud and fire, He taught them in sensible signs the sublime truth of His governance of mankind. When He took up His abode in the temple, He was training them for the conception of the universal religion, that He inhabits the whole earth. If God is really present in His world, and has an interest in the bearers of redemption to a chosen people, the kingdom of priests for mankind, is it not reasonable that He should show His form in the midst of the elements of nature, and His countenance in the faces of intelligent beings?

The Theophanies of the Old Testament lead on to the Christophanies of the New Testament—the incarnation, resurrection, ascension, and advent in glory, whereby the Messiah taught mankind the great lessons of redemption. And the Theophany of the Divine Spirit at Pentecost was a visible and audible pledge of His permanent residence in the Church during the era of grace. If mankind needed additional theophanies, doubtless they would be given by the God of all grace; but those recorded in the Bible, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, make a royal highway of light and glory throughout Biblical history, and give sufficient assurance of the presence of the Triune God with the people of God until the end of the age, and the accomplishment of the destinies of the world and man.

(2.) *The Institutions of the Old Testament.*—The institutions of the Old Testament religion are of a most elaborate character. Whatever theory we may hold as to their origin and development, whether given by Moses at the basis of the history, or from a long series of prophets and priests during the history, they present

* Is. lvii. 6.

a majestic system. About the throne-room of God, where the theophanic presence dwelt, were gathered sacred places, sacred furniture, sacred times, sacred orders of priesthood, rites of sacrifice and purification, and holy rules for life and conduct. These doubtless belong to the region of external religion, and to a lower stage in the religious training of man. The Old Testament prophets knew as well as we that they were mere forms, invalid without holy contents of grace, that God dwells not in temples made by hands, the heavens cannot contain Him in all their wondrous heights and breadths;* obedience was ever more sacred than sacrifice,† and all the beasts of the forests were God's; the cattle gathered in thousands upon the hills, how could men satisfy Him with one of the flock or herd?‡ Pure hearts were vastly more important than clean hands.§ The universal priesthood of Israel|| was older and more important than the Levitical and Aaronic orders.

This magnificent religious system is pure and holy throughout. A holy God can be worshipped only by a holy people, and in ceremonies of holiness. Hence, there was not, and could not be, any of the cruelty, licentiousness, intemperance, and manifold vices that were inseparably entwined in the institutions of the other great religions of the world. Divine institutions are forms of grace, dignity, and beauty, to set forth the wonders of redemption. They point forward, as by myriad flames of light, to the Messiah, who absorbs them in the sunshine of His presence. They then pass away as the shades of the night, when first they see the eyelids of the dawn.¶ They become, for all ages

* 1 Kings viii. 27.

† 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

‡ Ps. l. 8-14.

§ Is. i. 10-17; Ps. xxvi. 6.

|| Ex. xix. 5-6.

¶ Col. ii. 17.

and all men, the appropriate symbols of the universal religion. They evince by their history and their realization that God had for a season clothed Himself with these forms and ceremonies for the enlightenment and guidance of mankind.

B.—THE FAITH OF THE BIBLE.

The Faith of the Bible embraces the three topics: God, Man, and Redemption.

(1.) *The Doctrine of God.*—The God of the Bible is *one* God, not merely the God of a family, a tribe, a land, a nation, but the God of all the earth. It is true, Israel learned this only by degrees—but nowhere in the Bible do we find any recognition of other gods as having a place in a pantheon. God is sovereign of angels, seraphim and cherubim, of the hosts of heaven, as well as of Israel and mankind. The God of the Bible is *spirit*—He transcends the universe that He created, governs and directs to its appointed end, but He is immanent in His universe, inhabiting it and by His energy shaping all its forces. The God of the Bible is a *person*, bearing proper names, the most significant of which, Jahveh, indicates His personal interest in and guidance of His people, a person who may be approached in prayer and praise, and who recognizes His worshippers, bestowing upon them blessings of every kind. The God of the Bible is a *living* God, the fountain of every life and activity, living in all life, moving in all motion.

The Being of God in the Bible is still high above the best attainments of philosophical theism, and the most skilful constructions of the systematic theologian. When we turn from the best of them to the God of the Bible, it is like rising from earth to heaven. A

new doctrine of God is one of the greatest needs of our time.* The Bible gives it to us if we will only look at it and embrace it.

How was it possible for any ancient writer to have conceived or imagined such a God, unless God had presented Himself to him in the forms of the Reason, and he had seen and known Him as the only living and true God?

The attributes of God as set forth in the evolutions of Biblical Theology have none of those faults that appear more or less in the best systems of Theology.† That God is just, righteous, a God of equity and judgment, is as clear as the day. The great sovereign of the earth must do justice; we need no Bible to tell us that. But the favorite attribute of the Old Testament and the New is the attribute of mercy, because this attribute man needs most to know, and it is not so evident in the light of nature. The mercy of God is the theme upon which the histories and the prophets, the singers and the sages alike delight to dwell. The greatest of the theophanies granted to Moses was in order to reveal God as the gracious, compassionate, the long-suffering, abounding in mercy and faithfulness.‡ The love of God rises to its heights in the fatherly love of Deuteronomy,§ and the earlier Isaiah|| and Jeremiah;¶ in the marital love of Hosea,** Zephaniah, and the second Isaiah††—a love to an unfaithful wife, who has disgraced her husband and herself by many adulteries; ‡‡ and a child who rewards the faithful father with such persistent disobedience, that he must be beaten to

* Briggs' *Whither*, pp. 93 seq.

† Ex. xxxiv. 6-7.

‡ Is. i. 2 seq.

†† Is. liv. 1-17; lxii.

† Briggs' *Whither*, pp. 95 seq.

§ Deut. iv. 37; vii. 13; x. 15; xxxii. 6 seq.

¶ chap. xxx.-xxxl.

‡‡ Hos. i.-ii.

** Chap. i.-iii.

death and raised from the dead in order to be saved.* The love of God as taught in the Old Testament is hard for the Jew or the Christian to understand. It transcends human experience. It seems so impossible even for God, that men must be explaining it away. These wonderful chapters of the Old Testament are neglected in all of our creeds and systems of divinity—because these all exaggerate the divine justice and veracity, and fear lest God should be too merciful. Like Jonah, they have not been able to conceive how it is possible for God to redeem the great cities of heathendom. They have not seen that He could have any compassion on the Samaritans and the Moabites, who do not belong to the Israel of God, but are the enemies of the historic faith.† They have seen the throne of God and its pillars of righteousness and justice, and have supposed that sovereignty was enthroned there. They have not seen the *love* that was seated on the throne, and its messengers of mercy and faithfulness going forth with salvation to the children of men.‡

The love of God as taught in the Old Testament transcends human powers of conception. None could have taught such love who had not seen the loving countenance of God, and experienced the pulsation of that love in their own hearts. The love of God in the Bible is an invincible, a triumphant authority that invokes the loving obedience of men.

It is not necessary to depreciate the love of God in the Old Testament in order to exalt the love of the Messiah. The love of God in the Old Testament is the preparation to understand the love of God in the

* Jer. xxxi. 18-20; Hos. xi. 8, 9; xiii. 14.

† *How shall we revise the Westminster Confession of Faith?* pp. 98 seq. Charles Scribner's Sons.

‡ Ps. lxxxix. 14.

New Testament, who so *loved the world*, as to give His only begotten Son for its salvation.* O, when will men learn that the Bible means exactly what it says! It may destroy *our* logic and *our* syllogism, *our* systems and *our* methods. These we have too long regarded as authorities. Logic and syllogism, system and method, need constant criticism, verification, and revision; for too often they omit the essential thing. Their inductions are too narrow, their comprehension is too limited; they beg their premises and jump to their conclusions. The love of God to the world is more important than all the systems devised by men. It will shine forever as the central sun of the universe, when all the creeds and theologies have been buried in the oblivion of the eternities. It will go on through the centuries of the world, darting its rays of heavenly light, its beams of divine fire, and its regenerating and transforming movements, until the world knows that God loves the world, and the world adores Him with loving worship.

(2.) *Doctrine of Man*.—The doctrine of Man in the Bible is divine doctrine. A twin mirror shows man what he is in sin and misery, and what he is to be in holiness and happiness.

The Word of God is a revelation of the sin of man. Sin is exposed in the interests of redemption, that it may be brought to the consciousness of every reader of the Bible. The conscience approves the voice of the Spirit saying, "Thou art the man,"† when our sins disclose themselves in the picture gallery of the Bible, and we are convicted before the internal tribunal by a divine voice speaking with an authority that cannot be

* John iii. 16.

† 2 Sam. xii. 7.

questioned, bringing us to temporal judgment, that we may escape the ultimate doom.

The Bible presents sinful man in the midst of an original innocency and an ultimate perfection. Sin is only a temporary condition. Jew and Christian alike exaggerate the original innocency and depreciate the ultimate perfection.* The exaggeration of the original innocency is in the interest of an original righteousness, which, like a dress, might be removed as a punishment of sin and then put on again by grace.

Protestant theologians have exaggerated the original righteousness in order to magnify the guilt of our first parents. They thus come in conflict with ethical and religious philosophy. The Bible is not responsible for these exaggerations. The original man was innocent and sinless, but not possessed of that righteous and moral excellence that comes only by discipline and heavenly training. The temptation was a necessary means of grace. Man did not make his religious progress in the straight line of faith and obedience, but in the curved line of sin and redemption.

But the most important thing in Biblical Anthropology is the ideal of mankind. Man was created to be the lord of nature, the culmination of its evolutions. Man was made to be God-like; and though he sought it in the paths of disobedience, he is sure to gain it on the highway of redemption. Man was *one* in origin, and cannot be any other than *one* in the plan of God.† The processes of redemption ever keep the *race* in mind. The Bible tells us of a race origin, a race sin, a race ideal, a race redeemer, and a race redemption.‡

* Briggs' *Whither*, pp. 107 seq.

† Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 69 seq., 476 seq.

‡ No one can understand the doctrine of the Incarnation who does not conceive of a relation of the Messiah to the race. My revered teacher, Henry B.

These ideals of the Bible are high above reality. They are so grand and glorious that they have been persistently misunderstood and perverted by men. None of us rise to their transcendent glories.

God holds these twin mirrors before us to drive us from sin and to compel us to holiness. Divine authority in the Bible calls to every one of us: Forsake sin and live a perfect life; come unto Me and be My son, My holy one, the child of My good pleasure.

(3.) *Redemption*.—Redemption is born of the love of God; it aims at the transformation of the sinful and suffering race of man into the image of God. It comprehends the whole nature of man, his whole life, and the entire race. The history of the world is the divine discipline of mankind.

(a) The Old Testament doctrine of Redemption is chiefly concerned in the material interests of man. In the vast majority of cases it has to do with salvation from enemies, from afflictions and sorrows, from poverty and from death. Our Saviour's ministry was chiefly to the poor and the outcasts in Israel, the publicans and the harlots; and the redemption that He gave them was not merely the forgiveness of sins, but redemption from physical sufferings. The Christianity of Christ is to heal the sick, to feed the hungry, to give

Smith, says: "The destiny of man in Christ is to come to the measure of the stature of his fulness. Christ is the very ideal of humanity realized. Even in a human point of view, He is the consummate flower of the human race, a character unique, in wisdom, love, and holiness. Not only in the individual life and individual perfection does the relation subsist between man and Christ, but it also holds of man as a whole, of the collective race, of man in history. We are *all* to come into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. . . . He who gives the law to history is the law-giver of the race. In Him, and in Him alone, the secrets of humanity are hid, its enigmas resolved, its salvation insured. He who redeems the race must be the Head and Lord of the race. The whole human family finds its centre, its crown, its peace, in Him."—*System of Christian Theology*, pp. 383-4.

drink to the thirsty, to comfort all that mourn. Such are the tests that the Messiah applies in His royal judgment, whether His servants have followed His example in doing just these things in their ministry.*

The Redemption taught in the Bible aims to remove all the ills that flesh is heir to. There can be no Darkest Africa or Darkest London which the light of Redemption may not illuminate with heavenly influences. Poverty, vice, and crime are inconsistent with Christianity. Christianity has undertaken to remove them from the world. The Bible gives us the principles, the examples, and the divine authority for their extirpation. Christianity is inconsistent with the present social condition of New York, and the other great cities of the world. We have no right to the name of Christians; we bring reproach on the name of Jesus Christ; we dishonor the God of the Bible, and are stumbling-blocks in the way of the suffering multitudes, obstructing their way to God, and their entrance into the kingdom of heaven, if we do not, with all our souls, strive to relieve their misery and want. The Bible, through and through, insists upon the redemption of the bodies of men, as well as their souls, and of the whole framework of human society. This heavenly teaching is so against the prejudices and the attainments of mankind, that it is an unmistakable evidence of the divine authority of the Scriptures that so strongly urge it upon us.

(b) The Redemption of the Bible comprehends the whole process of grace. Modern Protestants have unduly emphasized the beginning of redemption, justification by faith alone.† The slight put upon Christian love prevented many a devout soul, like Staupitz,

* Matth. xxv. 31-46.

† Briggs' *Whither*, pp. 142 seq.

from joining in the Reformation. One of the disciples of Luther taught that good works were hurtful to salvation; and a practical, if not a theoretical, Antinomianism has too often been one of the Adam's apples of Protestantism.

James has a word for the men of this generation—Faith without works is dead.* A justification that does not lead on to sanctification gives no credentials of genuineness. A faith that does not result in a life of repentance discredits itself.

The movement called Methodism laid too much stress upon the experience of regeneration at the beginning of the Christian's life.† But a regeneration that does not exhibit a real, earnest Christian life, fruitful in good works, is not a regeneration into the kingdom of God, whatever else it may be.

The Bible rises high above the faults of modern theology, and comprehends in its redemption of man his justification, sanctification, and glorification; his regeneration, his renovation, and his transformation; his faith, his repentance, and his holy love. No one who is not entirely saved can sustain the judgment of the day of doom.‡ If this Biblical doctrine could be impressed upon the men of our day, the *authority* of God would disclose itself in a transformation of the world, and the introduction of an era in which holiness would be the aim of mankind.

(c) Another fault of Protestant theology is in its limitation of the process of redemption to this world,§ and its neglect of those vast periods of time which have

* James ii. 26.

† Briggs' *Whither*, pp. 118 *seq.*

‡ 1 Thess. iii. 13; 1 Cor. i. 8; Rom. viii. 29-30; Eph. iv. 13-26.

§ Briggs' article, *Redemption after Death*, in *Mag. of Christian Literature*, Dec., 1889. See also *Whither*, pp. 206 *seq.*

elapsed for most men in the Middle State between death and the resurrection. The Roman Catholic Church is firmer here, though it smears the Biblical doctrine with not a few hurtful errors. The reaction against this limitation, as seen in the theory of second probation, is not surprising. I do not find this doctrine in the Bible,* but I do find in the Bible the doctrine of a Middle State of conscious higher life in the communion with Christ and the multitude of the departed of all ages;† and of the necessity of entire sanctification, in order that the work of redemption may be completed.‡ There is no authority in the Scriptures, or in the creeds of Christendom, for the doctrine of immediate sanctification at death. The only sanctification known to experience, to Christian orthodoxy, and to the Bible, is progressive sanctification.§ Progressive sanctification after death, is the doctrine of the Bible and the Church; and it is of vast importance in our times that we should understand it, and live in accordance with it. The bugbear of a judgment immediately after death, and the illusion of a magical transformation in the dying hour|| should be banished from the world. They are conceits derived from the Ethnic religions, and without basis in the Bible or Christian experience as expressed in the symbols of the Church. The former makes death a terror to the best of men, the latter makes human life and experience of no effect; and both cut the nerves of Christian activity and striving after sanctification. Renouncing them as hurtful, unchristian errors, we look with hope and joy for the continuation of the processes of grace, and the

* *Whither*, pp. 217 seq.

† 2 Cor. v. 1-9; Heb. xii. 22-24, etc.

‡ Matth. v. 48; John xvii. 17; Rom. viii. 29-30; 1 John iii. 2.

§ *West. Confession*, chap. xiii.

| *Whither*, p. 195.

wonders of redemption in the company of the blessed, to which the faithful are all hastening; and through these blessed hopes we enter into the communion of all saints, and have a happy consciousness of the one holy catholic Church, whose centre and majestic frame are chiefly in the skies, the one body of the one Christ.

(d) The Biblical redemption is a redemption of our race and of universal nature. The Bible teaches that the material universe shares in the destiny of man, and is in throes of birth for this blessed hope.* As the ancient Jews limited redemption to Israel and overlooked the nations, so the Church limited redemption to those who were baptized, and excluded the heathen and the unbaptized; and Presbyterians have too often limited redemption by their doctrine of Election. The Bible knows no such limitations. The Bible teaches election, but an election of love.† Loving only the elect is earthly, human teaching. Electing men to salvation by the touch of divine love—that is heavenly doctrine. The one drives men away in despair, the other unites men with joy to the love of God.‡ The Bible does not teach universal salvation, but it does teach the salvation of the world, of the race of man, and that cannot be accomplished by the selection of a limited number of individuals from the mass. The holy arm that worketh salvation does not contract its hand in grasping only a few; it stretches its loving fingers so as to comprehend as many as possible—a definite number, but multitudes that no one can number. The salvation of the world can only mean the world

* Rom. viii. 18-25.

† *Whither*, pp. 95 seq.

‡ “Election is the expression of God’s infinite love towards the human race, redeeming man from sin through Christ, and by the Holy Spirit bringing him into this state of redemption, so far as it is consistent with the interests of God’s great and final kingdom.”—H. B. Smith, *System of Christian Theology*, p. 505.

as a whole, compared with which the unredeemed will be so few and insignificant, and evidently beyond the reach of redemption by their own act of rejecting it and hardening themselves against it, and by descending into such depths of demoniacal depravity in the Middle State, that they will vanish from the sight of the redeemed as altogether and irredeemably evil, and never more disturb the harmonies of the saints.

C.—BIBLICAL ETHICS.

We are now prepared for the *Ethics of the Bible*, the fruitage of Theology, the test of all the rest. Biblical Ethics presents us an advancing system of morals—God showing His holy face and character and the sublime precepts of morality as men were able to bear them.

In the field of Biblical Ethics there is considerable criticism at the present time. Biblical Ethics have not been so carefully studied as Biblical Religion and Biblical Faith; therefore the principles that determine their development are not so clearly understood. There is ample room for criticism in the ethical precepts and in the conduct of the holy men of the Bible.

The ancient worthies, Noah and Abraham, Jacob and Judah, David and Solomon, were in a low stage of moral advancement. Doubtless it is true, that we would not receive such men into our families, if they lived among us and did such things now as they did then. We might be obliged to send them to prison, lest they should defile the community with their example. But they do not live now; they lived in an early age of the world, when the divine exposition of sin was not so searching, and the divine law of righteousness was not so evident. They were not great sinners to their age; they were the saints of God.

Abraham was the father of the faithful,* the great hero of faith for all time, and it is an honor for a Christian to count him as father. When he went into the abode of the dead, he held his pre-eminence among the departed. He made up for his defects in this life by advancing in the school of sanctification there open to him. Let us not suppose that we have passed beyond him in sinlessness or ethical elevation. Our blessed Lord sees the poor Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, the synonym of Paradise itself.†

Jacob was crafty and treacherous, but he was a pilgrim to the Holy Land, one whose whole ambition was set upon the holy places, one who is the father of all pilgrims, one who, therefore, gave his name to the Holy Land and to the entire Israel of God.

We should look more at their saintly characters that have given them their place among the heroes of the faithful. Thus we would trace the moral development of Israel, and see it advancing through the centuries until it reaches its height in the holy Messiah.

It has been too much the custom to use the ancient heroes of the faith as examples to rebuke modern sinners. They ought to be held up as examples to make modern heroes. And so it has been thought that Israel was a nation chiefly remarkable for its stiff neck and stubborn heart, for its unfaithfulness and its apostasy. Not so do we read in the Old Testament. Israel was the people of God, dearly beloved, and faithful in the main, ever advancing, never attaining the ideal. I fear that the Christian Church does not present so good a history as the people of Israel in the olden time. If Israel did not live up to the ethical principles of Moses and the prophets, have we lived up to the ethics of

* Rom. iv. 16-17.

† Luke xvi. 23.

Jesus and His apostles? It is just this feature of Biblical Ethics that assures us that divine authority is in it. It presents an ideal ever far above historical reality.

The Ten Words rise before us in majesty as the guide of morality for the Christian Church, and are as authoritative as when first uttered by a divine voice from Sinai.

Most of the ethical provisions of the Pentateuchal codes were of local and temporal validity, but there are many principles in them that are invaluable hints for the solution of the social problems of our day. There are ethical precepts in the Psalter and the Prophets, and, above all, in the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament that we need to study and to know. It is a very significant fact that this Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, which is essentially ethical, has been so neglected by theologians. The Book of Proverbs, the Book of Job, the Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes are the masterpieces of Old Testament ethics. No portion of the Old Testament is likely to prove more useful in the ethical age upon which we are now entering. The holy God calls holy men into His service:

“ Who of us can abide with devouring fire?
Who of us can abide with everlasting burnings?
One walking in perfect righteousness, and speaking uprightly,
Refusing the spoil of oppression,
Shaking his palms from holding a bribe,
Shutting his ears from hearing of bloodshed,
And closing his eyes from seeing evil.”*

If the ethical parts of the Old Testament have been neglected, this is still more the case with the ethical parts of the New Testament. It has been said that Calvinists come to a halt in a certain chapter of the

* Is. xxxiii. 15 *seq.*

Epistle to the Romans, but it may also be said that the Arminians come to a halt but a short distance further on. Neither Calvinist nor Arminian has risen to the ethical heights of the closing chapters of the epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians. The Epistle of James is ethical throughout; it has not been a favorite epistle for Protestants. The epistles of John have been too high in their mystic elevation for the modern world.

But the greatest sin against the Bible has been the neglect of the ethics of Jesus. If one studies the theology of Jesus he is impressed by the fact that it is profoundly ethical, not only in the Sermon on the Mount, but also throughout His discourses. The holy man, living such a holy life, how could it be otherwise than that holy words were ever on His lips? Those who question the historicity of the life of Jesus and regard many of His teachings as misunderstood by the evangelists who report them, stand in awe and bow in adoration when they consider His ethical precepts and recognize their divinity.

Tolstoi says Christians think that Jesus did not mean what He said. Tolstoi's criticism is severe, but is it not just? If we really believed that Jesus meant what He said, how could we live such selfish lives? The words of Jesus are so high above us that it seems impossible to realize them in actual life, and so we strive to get a meaning out of them that will be useful to us, and we bury the sublime ideal in a fictitious and temporary explanation.* It is my opinion

* "The ecclesiastical Christ is to a large extent not the Christ of the Gospels, but a creation of scholastic theology. Notwithstanding all our preaching, Jesus Christ is not well known. That He is not well known is partly the fault of our preaching. Men are not permitted to see Jesus with open face, but only through the thick veil of a dogmatic system. The religious spirit of Jesus, His attitude towards the religion in vogue in Judæa in His time, and its grounds,

that if the grace of God should so impel a man that he could be transformed into the image of the holy Jesus, and, like Jesus, rebuke sin in high places and trouble the people with his unapproachable holiness, he would earn the reward of Jesus even in this generation—at the hands of Christian theologians and ecclesiastics. The cry would resound through the streets of New York, “Crucify him! crucify him!”

The words of Jesus, like the life of Jesus, are the ideals of perfection, that men thus far have been unable to understand and realize; but they will be realized when the world has been so trained and disciplined in the progress of sanctification that it shall become like Him.

D.—THE MESSIAH.

Thus far we have spoken of the Messiah only indirectly; but every line of religion, doctrine, and morals has brought us unto Him. The Messiah is the culmination of the Old Testament. He is the pivot of History. All through these nineteen centuries Christians have been learning from their Lord, and yet how little do we know of Him. Each period in the history of the Church has been so deeply impressed with some small portion of what the Scriptures have revealed about Him, that it has devoted itself exclusively to that, has exaggerated that, and left other equally important phases of the doctrine unexplored.

Sometimes the deity of Christ has been so exalted

His humane sympathies, His thoughts of God, His ethical ideal, have been allowed to fall into the background. Hence types of piety have sprung up within the Church, which, whatever virtues they may possess, are not characteristically Christian. It has become possible to be very religious and yet be very unchristian, not only largely ignorant of Christ, but antagonistic to Him in spirit; to be, in short, a modern reproduction of the Pharisee, imagining one's self to be one of the most faithful friends of Jesus, while hostile to all the true Christian interests of the time.”—A. B. Bruce, *Kingdom of God*, p. 330.

that men have forgotten His humanity. Then others have been so absorbed in the wonders of His humanity that they have not seen His divinity. Then the complex nature, the union of the human and divine in the Theanthropos,—the profoundest minds of the Christian centuries have thought upon it and unfolded some of its glories, but it is still like the very heavens for heights of mystery and glory. The Messiah's state of humiliation has so absorbed men that they have neglected His state of exaltation and glory. In His state of humiliation modern Protestants have absorbed themselves in the crucifixion and death, and the doctrine of the Atonement involved therein. The wondrous doctrine of the Incarnation has been neglected until recent times.* It was the merit of my beloved teacher, Henry B. Smith, that he made *Incarnation in order to Redemption*† the structural principle of his theology. The holy life of Jesus, long neglected, has in recent years been studied as never before. But the Messiah's descent into the abode of the dead—a doctrine of great importance to the ancient Church‡—of His resurrection—His enthronement—His reign of grace—His second advent—O, how these have been neglected!

The Messianic idea of the Old Testament and the Christology of the New Testament are vastly fuller and richer and grander than any one has imagined. The Christ of the Bible will exert a much greater power upon the coming generations when they grasp the full Biblical doctrine and cease expending their strength and exhausting their energies in the speculative elaboration of some few of its phases.§

* *Whither*, pp. 112 seq.

† Henry B. Smith's *System of Christian Theology*.

‡ See *Redemption after Death*. *Mag. Christ. Lit.*, Dec., 1889.

§ *How shall we Revise?* pp. 20 seq.

In all departments of Biblical Theology there is new life and new doctrine and new morals for the Church of God. More light is about to break forth from the Holy Scriptures upon the Christian world,—light for all the churches, for all men, for all nations. The old methods of building on selected texts and isolated passages, which you will find in all the creeds and in all the dogmatic systems,* is about to pass away. The inductive study of the Bible forces us to study every word, sentence, and clause, and rise in the inductive process until the whole organism of the Bible is presented to us. Such study of the Bible, so far as I have been able to pursue it, has made it to me the freshest, the newest, the most wonderful of Books; has brought about in my mind a different conception in every department of Theology. And many of those things that once seemed to be probabilities on the basis of speculative theology and confessional theology have, in the light of God's Word and in the conviction of divine authority, come to be certainties—the verities of God.

I have not departed in any respect from the orthodox teaching of the Christian Church as set forth in its official creeds. I have had the inestimable privilege of learning, as a student and a friend, from two of the greatest Systematic Theologians of our century—Henry B. Smith and Isaac A. Dörner. These built upon the Bible and the Creeds, the History of Doctrine and the highest attainments of the Human Reason. Such Systematic Theologians the Church greatly needs at the present time, and no one can value them and their work more than I do. These never set up their systems as tests of orthodoxy. They renounce scholasticism

* *How shall we Revise?* pp. 137 seq.

and dogmatism. For the dogmatism of mere traditional opinion and of the dogmaticians, I have no respect. Their speculations are worthy of no more consideration than the speculations of other scholars. But for the creeds of Christ's Church I have the greatest respect, for I am one of those who believes that God inhabits His Church and guides it in its official decisions, not inerrantly in every utterance, but in the essential doctrines in which the universal Church is in concord. But the theology of the creeds marks only the consensus of attainment of the Church in the several stages of advance in the history of doctrine. They are far below the Biblical ideal, and, therefore, the best of them seems to give us such a small theology when set in the length and breadth, the heights and depths of the theology of the Bible.

As I have recently said, "Christian churches should go right on in the lines drawn by their own history and their own symbols; this will in the end lead to greater heights, in which there will be concord. Imperfect statements will be corrected by progress. All forms of error will disappear before the breath of truth. We are not to tear down what has cost our fathers so much. We are rather to strengthen the foundations and buttress the buildings as we build higher. Let the light shine higher and higher, the clear, bright light of day. Truth fears no light. Light chases error away. True orthodoxy seeks the full blaze of the noontide sun. In the light of such a day the unity of Christendom will be gained." *

* *Whither*, pp. 297-8.

IV.—THE HARMONY OF THE SOURCES OF DIVINE AUTHORITY.

I have endeavored to lead you through the obstructions that confront the student of the Bible into the Holy Word itself, that you might recognize the authority of God in the Religion, Faith, and Morals of the Bible. I must now ask you to go back with me and use the advantages we have gained for a brief review of those other seats of divine authority—the Church and the Reason.

If God really speaks to men in these three centres, there ought to be no contradiction between them. They ought to be complementary, and they should combine in a higher unity for the guidance and the comfort of men. It is my profound conviction that we are on the threshold of just such a happy reconciliation. The discrepancies that men have found have not been in the authority of God Himself, or in the essential principles that have enveloped it, but in those formal and circumstantial things upon which human nature in its weakness and its depravity ever lays so much stress. Removing these human conceits and follies and these obstructions erected by well-meaning but misguided men from the Bible, the Church, and the Reason, it will be manifest that they *are*, they *always have been*, and they always *will be* harmonious.

It is human folly to set the Bible against the Church, or either or both of them against the Reason. Whenever this is done, the opposition is only in the human forms and settings. It is clear to me that the Bible needs the Church and the Reason ere it can exert its full power upon the life of men.

Institutional Christianity was established by Christ

and His apostles, and no one can safely ignore it. It is the need of our time in that advance toward Church Unity that we are about to make, and to make with so much energy and decision. It is necessary that we should know what Institutional Christianity really is, that we should be members *of the visible Church* and share in the sacrifices and triumphs of the kingdom of God. The Bible, from the very nature of the case, leads us through its forms into the presence-chamber of God, but our minds are filled at the same time with the historic forms of the ancient world. It is the office of the Church, in the use of its institutions, to bring us into communion with the Triune God in the forms of the modern world, and give us the assurance of His presence with the Church through its history, and with us in the hour and moment of our use of its institutions. The Church unites with the Bible in giving us the assurance of God's presence and authority throughout History, Christian as well as Hebrew, and of His gracious help in the present. It gives us the blessed experience of the communion of saints. It opens the eyes to see that we are in the outer ranks of innumerable lines of the host of the living God, ever on the march through the life in this world into the gates of Paradise and onward on the highway of holiness to the throne of God and the Lamb which ever bounds the horizon of the beatific vision. The neglect of the Church as a means of grace retards the use of the Bible itself as a means of grace and dulls our sensitiveness to the presence of God.

The Reason also has its rights, its place and importance in the economy of Redemption. I rejoice at the age of Rationalism, with all its wonderful achievements in philosophy. I look upon it as preparing men

to use their reasons in the last great age of the world. Criticism will go on with its destruction of errors, and its verification of truth and fact. The human mind will learn to know its powers and to use them. The forms of the reason, the conscience, the religious feeling, the æsthetic taste—all the highest energies of our nature, will exert themselves as never before. God will appear in their forms, and give an inward assurance and certainty greater than that given in former ages. These increased powers of the human soul will enable men to search those higher mysteries of Biblical Theology that no theologian has yet mastered, and those mysteries that are wrapt up in the institutions of the Church, to all who really know them. It is impossible that the Bible and the Church should ever exert their full power until the human Reason, trained and strained to the uttermost, rise to the heights of its energies, and reach forth after God and His Christ with absolute devotion and self-renouncing love. Then we may expect on the heights of theological speculation, and from the peaks of Christian experience, that those profound doctrines that now divide Christendom by their antinomies will appear as the two sides of the same law, or the foci of a divine ellipse, which is itself but one of the curves in that conic section of God's dominion, in which, in loving wisdom, He has appointed the lines of our destiny.

Go out into the country in the late winter or early spring, and you will see, everywhere, great activity. The farmers are at work with axe, and saw, and knives, the instruments of destruction, cutting off the limbs of trees, and pruning vines and bushes, and rooting out weeds; fires are running over the fields and meadows, the air is filled with smoke, and it seems as if every-

thing were going to destruction. But they are destroying the dead wood, dry and brittle stubble, and noxious weeds. They are removing them out of the way of the life that is beating beneath the surface of the ground, and throbbing in tree and bush. In a few days the fields will be mantled in living green, the trees and bushes will wave their leaves joyously, and deck themselves with blossoms of every variety of beauteous form and color, and the world will rejoice in a new spring-time. Thus is it at the present time in the higher world of religion and morals. Criticism is at work with knife and fire. Let us cut down everything that is dead and harmful, every kind of dead orthodoxy, every species of effete ecclesiasticism, all merely formal morality, all those dry and brittle fences that constitute denominationalism, and are the barriers of Church Unity. Let us burn up every form of false doctrine, false religion, and false practice. Let us remove every incumbrance out of the way for a new life; the life of God is moving throughout Christendom, and the spring-time of a new age is about to come upon us:

“ Let the wilderness and the solitary places be glad,
And let the desert rejoice, and let it blossom as the rose;
Let it blossom abundantly, and let it rejoice,
Even with joy and singing;
The glory of Lebanon has been given unto it,
The excellency of Carmel and Sharon;
They see the glory of Jahveh,
The excellency of our God.
Strengthen ye the weak hands,
And confirm the feeble knees.
Say to the fearful of heart, Be strong,
Fear not: behold your God,
He cometh with vengeance, with a divine recompense;
He cometh to save you.”—(Isai. xxxiv. 1-4.)

7

[It has been thought best to give the following extract from Dr. Briggs' "*Biblical Study*," pp. 390 seq., which presents his views of the idea, place, methods, and divisions of Biblical Theology.]

IV.

THE POSITION AND IMPORTANCE OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

Having considered the origin and history of Biblical Theology, we are now prepared to show its position and importance, and define it as to its idea, method, and system. (1) *The idea of Biblical Theology*.—Biblical Theology is that theological discipline which presents the theology of the Bible in its historical formation within the canonical writings. The discipline limits itself strictly to the theology of the *Bible*, and thus excludes from its range the theology of the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical writings of the Jewish and Christian sects, the ideas of the various external religious parties, and the religions of the world brought in contact with the people of God at different periods in their history. It is true that these must come into consideration for comparative purposes in order to show their influence positively and negatively upon the development of Biblical doctrine; for the Biblical religion is a religion in the midst of a great variety of religions of the world, and its distinctive features can be shown only after the elimination of the features that are common with other religions. We must show from the historical circumstances, the psychological preparations, and all the conditioning

influences, how far the origin and development of the particular type and the particular stage of religious development of Israel and the Church were influenced by these external forces. We must find the supernatural influence that originated and maintained the Biblical types and the Biblical religion as distinct and separate from all other religions. And then these other religious forces will not be employed as co-ordinate factors with the Biblical material, as is done by Reuss, Schwegler, and Kuenen, who make Biblical Theology simply a history of religion, or of doctrine in the times of the Bible and in the Jewish nation. Rather these theological conceptions of other religions will be seen to be subordinate factors as influencing Biblical Theology from *without*, and not from within, as presenting the external occasions and conditions of its growth, and not its normal and regulative principles. The Biblical limit will be maintained; for the Biblical material stands apart by itself, in that the theology therein contained is the theology of a divine Revelation, and thus distinguished from all other theologies, both as to its origin and its development; for they give us either the products of natural religion in various normal and abnormal systems, originating and developing under the influence of unguided or partially guided human religious strivings, or else are apostasies or deflections from the religion of revelation in its various stages of development.

The discipline we have defined as presenting the *Theology* of the Bible. It is true that the term Biblical Theology is ambiguous as being too broad, having been employed as a general term including Biblical Introduction, Hermeneutics, and so on. And yet we must have a broad term, for we cannot limit our discipline to *Dogmatics*, for Biblical Dogmatics, as rightly conceived, is a part of Sys-

tematic Theology, being *a priori* and deductive in method. Biblical Dogmatics deduces the dogmas from the Biblical material and arranges them in an *a priori* dogmatic system, presenting not so much the doctrines of the *Bible* in their simplicity and in their concrete form as they are given in the Scriptures themselves, but such doctrines as may be fairly derived from the Biblical material by the logical process, or can be gained by setting the Bible in the midst of philosophy and church tradition. We cannot deny to this department the propriety of using the name *Biblical* Dogmatics or even Biblical Theology. For where a Dogmatic system derives its chief or only material from the Scriptures, there is force in its claim to be Biblical Theology. We do not, therefore, use the term Biblical Theology as applied to our discipline with the implication that a dogmatic system derived from the Bible is *non-Biblical* or *not sufficiently Biblical*, but as a term which has come to be applied to the discipline which we are now distinguishing from Biblical Dogmatics. Biblical Theology, in the sense of our discipline, and as distinguished from Biblical Dogmatics, cannot take a step beyond the Bible itself, or, indeed, beyond the particular writing or author under consideration at the time. Biblical Theology has to do only with the sacred author's conceptions, and has nothing whatever to do with the legitimate *logical* consequences. It is not to be assumed that either the author or his generation argued out the consequences of their statements, still less discerned them by intuition; although, on the other hand, we must always recognize that the religion and, indeed, the entire theology of a period or an author may be far wider and more comprehensive than the record or records that have been left of it; and that, in all cases, Biblical Theology will give us the *minimum*

rather than the *maximum* of the theology of a period or author. But, on the other hand, we must also estimate the fact that this *minimum* is the inspired authority to which alone we can appeal. The only consequences with which Biblical Theology has to do are those historical ones that later Biblical writers gained in their advanced knowledge of divine revelation, those conclusions that are true historically—whatever our subjective conclusions may be as to the legitimate logical results of their statements. And even here the interpretation and use of later writers are not to be assigned to the authors themselves or the theology of their times. We would therefore urge that the term Biblical Dogmatics should be applied to that part of Dogmatics which rests upon the Bible and derives its material from the Bible by the legitimate use of its principles. Dogmatics as a theological discipline, in our judgment, is far wider than the Biblical material that is employed by the dogmatician. The Biblical material should be the normal and regulative material, but the dogmatician will make use of the deductions from the Bible and other authorities that the Church has made in the history of doctrine and incorporated in her creeds or preserved in the doctrinal treatises of the theologians. He will also make use of right reason, and of philosophy, and science, and the religious consciousness as manifest in the history of the Church and in the Christian life of the day. It is all-important that the various sources should be carefully discriminated, and the Biblical material set apart by itself in Biblical Dogmatics, lest in the commingling of material, *that* should be regarded as Biblical which is *non*-Biblical, or *extra* Biblical, or *contra* Biblical, as has so often happened in the working of ecclesiastical tradition. And, even then, when Biblical Dogmatics has been distin-

guished in Systematic Theology, it should be held apart from Biblical Theology, for Biblical Dogmatics is the point of contact of Systematic Theology with Exegetical Theology, and Biblical Theology is the point of contact of Exegetical Theology with Systematic Theology, each belonging to its own distinctive branch of theology with its characteristic methods and principles. That system of theology which would anxiously confine itself to supposed Biblical material, to the neglect of the material presented by philosophy, science, literature, art, comparative religion, the history of doctrine, the symbols, the liturgies, and the life of the Church, and the pious religious consciousness of the individual or of Christian society, must be extremely defective, unscientific, and cannot make up for its defects by an appeal to the Scriptures and a claim to be Biblical. None of the great systematic theologians, from the most ancient times, have ever proposed any such course. It has been the resort of the feebler Pietists in Germany, and of the narrower Evangelicalism of Great Britain and America, doomed to defeat and destruction, for working in such contracted lines.

We do not, therefore, present Biblical Theology as a substitute for Systematic Theology. Systematic Theology is more comprehensive than Biblical Theology can ever be. But we urge the importance of Biblical Theology in order to the important distinction that should be made, in the first place, between the Biblical sources and all other sources of Theology, and then, in the second place, to distinguish between the Biblical Theology as presented in the Scriptures themselves, and Biblical Dogmatics which makes legitimate deductions and applications of the Biblical material.

But Biblical Theology is wider than the doctrines of

the Bible. It includes *Ethics* also. Here the school of Baur, and even Weiss and Van Oosterzee, would stop. But Schmid, Schultz, and Oehler are correct in taking Biblical Theology to include *religion* as well as doctrines and morals, that is, those historic persons, facts, and relations which embody religious, dogmatical, and ethical ideas. This discrimination is important in Systematic Theology, but it is indispensable in Biblical Theology, where everything is still in the *concrete*. Thus, a fundamental question in the theology of the New Testament, is what to do with the life of Jesus. The life of Jesus is, as Schmid shows, the fruitful source of His doctrine, and a theology which does not estimate it, lacks foundation and vital power. The life of Jesus may indeed be regarded from two distinct points of view, as a biographical, or a doctrinal and religious subject. The birth of Jesus may be regarded as a pure historical fact or as an incarnation. His suffering and death may be historical subjects, or as expressing atonement. His life may afford biographical matter or be considered as religious, doctrinal, and ethical, in that His life was a new religious force, a redemptive influence and an ethical example. Biblical Theology will have to consider, therefore, what the life of Jesus presents for its various departments. And so the great fact of Pentecost, the Christophanies to Peter, Paul, and John, and the apostolic council at Jerusalem must all be brought into consideration. And in the Old Testament we must consider the various covenants and the religious institutions and laws that were grouped about them. Without religion, with its persons, events, and institutions, Biblical Theology would lose its *foundations*, and without ethical results it would fail of its rich fruitage.

We state, furthermore, that the discipline presents

the theology of the Bible in its *historical formation*. This does not imply that it limits itself to the consideration of the various particular conceptions of the various authors, writings, and periods, as Weiss and even Oehler maintain, but with Schmid, Messner, Van Oosterzee after Neander it seeks the *unity in the variety*; ascertains the roots of the divergencies, traces them each in their separate historical development, shows them co-operating in the formation of one organic system. For Biblical Theology would not present a mere conglomerate of heterogeneous material in a bundle of miscellaneous Hebrew literature, but would ascertain whether there is not some principle of organization; and it finds that principle in a supernatural divine revelation and communication of redemption in the successive covenants of grace extending through many centuries, operating through many minds, and in a great variety of literary styles, employing all the faculties of man, and all the types of human nature, in order to the accomplishment of one massive, all-embracing, and everlasting *Divine Word* adapted to every age, every nation, every type of character, every temperament of mankind; the whole world.

(2) *The Place of Biblical Theology*.—Biblical Theology belongs to the department of Exegetical Theology as a higher exegesis completing the exegetical process, and presenting the essential material and principles of the other departments of theology.

The boundaries between Exegetical and Historical Theology are not so sharply defined as those between either of them and Systematic Theology. All Historical Theology has to deal with *sources*, and in this respect must consider them in their variety and unity as well as development; and hence many theologians com-

bine Exegetical Theology and Historical Theology under one head—Historical Theology. It is important, however, to draw the distinction, for this reason. The *sources* of Biblical Theology are in different relation from the sources of a history of doctrine, inasmuch as they constitute a body of divine revelation, and in this respect to be kept distinct from all other *sources*, even cotemporary and of the same nation. They have an absolute authority which no other sources can have. The stress is to be laid less upon their historical development than upon them as an organic body of revelation, and this stress upon their importance as *sources* not only for historical development, but also for dogmatic reconstruction and practical application, requires that the special study of them should be exalted to a separate discipline and a distinct branch of theology.

Now in the department of Exegetical Theology, Biblical Theology occupies the highest place, the latest and crowning achievement. It is a higher exegesis completing the Exegetical Process. All other branches of Exegetical Theology are presupposed by it. The Biblical Literature must first be studied as sacred literature. All questions of date of writing, integrity, construction, style, and authorship must be determined by the principles of the Higher Criticism. Biblical Canonics determines the extent and authority of the various writings that are to be regarded as composing the sacred canon, and discriminates them from all other writings by the criticism of the believing spirit enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit in the Church. Biblical Textual Criticism ascertains the true text of the writings in the study of MSS. and versions and citations, and seeks to present it in its pure primitive forms. Biblical Hermeneutics lays down the rules of

Biblical Interpretation, and Biblical Exegesis applies these rules to the various particular passages of the sacred Scriptures. Now Biblical Theology accepts all these rules and results thus determined and applied. It is not its office to go into the detailed examination of the verse and the section, but it must accept the results of a thorough exegesis and criticism in order to advance thereon and thereby to its own proper work of higher exegesis; namely, rising from the comparison of verse with verse, and paragraph with paragraph, where simple exegesis is employed, to the still more difficult and instructive comparison of writing with writing, author with author, period with period, until by generalization and synthesis the theology of the Bible is attained as an organic whole.

Biblical Theology is thus the culmination of Exegetical Theology, and must be in an important relation to all other branches of theology. For Historical Theology it presents the great principles of the various periods of history, the fundamental and controlling tendencies which, springing from human nature and operating in all the religions of the world, find their proper expression and satisfaction in the normal development of Divine Revelation, but which, breaking loose from these salutary bonds, become perverted and distorted into abnormal forms, producing false and heretical principles and radical errors. And so in the Biblical unity of these tendencies Biblical Theology presents the ideal unity for the Church and the Christian in all times of the world's history. For Systematic Theology, Biblical Theology affords the holy material to be used in Biblical Apologetics, Dogmatics, and Ethics, the fundamental and controlling material out of which that systematic structure must be built which will express

the intellectual and moral needs of the particular age, fortify the Church for offence and defence in the struggles with the anti-Christian world, and give unity to its life, its efforts, and its dogmas in all ages. For Practical Theology it presents the various types of religious experience and of doctrinal and ethical ideas which must be skilfully applied to the corresponding differences of type which exist in all times, in all churches, in all lands, and indeed in all religions and races of mankind. Biblical Theology is indeed the *Irenic* force which will do much to harmonize the antagonistic forces and various departments of theology, and bring about that *reconciliation within the church*, which is the *greatest* requisite of our times.

(3) *Method of Biblical Theology.*—The method employed by Biblical Theology is a blending of the genetic and the inductive methods. The method of Biblical Theology arises out of the nature of the discipline and its place in Theological Encyclopædia. As it must show the Theology of the Bible in its historic formation, ascertain its genesis, the laws of its development from germinal principles, the order of its progress in every individual writer, and from writer to writer and age to age in the successive periods and in the whole Bible, it must employ the genetic method. It is this genesis which is becoming more and more important in our discipline, and is indeed the chief point of discussion in our day. Can all be explained by a natural genesis, or must the supernatural be called in? The various Rationalistic efforts to explain the genesis of the Biblical types of doctrine in their variety and their combination in a unity in the Scriptures are extremely unsatisfactory and unscientific. With all the resemblances to other religions, the Biblical religion is *so* different that its

differences must be explained, and these can only be explained by the claims of the sacred writers themselves, that God Himself in various forms of Theophany and Christophany revealed Himself to initiate and to guide the religion of the Bible in its various movements and stages. Mosaism centres about the great Theophany of Sinai, as Christianity centres about the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, and the life, death, ascension, and second advent therein involved. It is now the problem of Biblical Theology, as it has traced the Theology of the Jewish Christian type to the Theophany of Pentecost, and of the Pauline to the Christophany on the way to Damascus, so to trace the Johannean type and the various Old Testament types to corresponding supernatural initiation. The Johannean type may be traced to the Christophanies of Patmos.* The Old Testament is full of Theophanies which originate particular Covenants and initiate all the great movements in the history of Israel.

As it has to exhibit the unity in the variety of the various conceptions and statements of the writings and authors of every different type, style, and character, and by comparison generalize to its results, Biblical Theology must employ the *inductive* method and the synthetic process. This inductive method is the true method of Exegetical Theology. The details of Exegesis have been greatly enriched by this method during the present century, especially by the labors of German divines, and in most recent times by numerous laborers in Great Britain and America. But the majority of the laborers

* We regard the Apocalypse as the earliest of the Johannean writings. The Christophanies therein described had been granted to the apostle prior to the composition of the Gospel, so that the Gospel was written under their influence still more even than under the recollection of the association with Jesus during His earthly ministry.

in Biblical Theology have devoted their strength to the working out of the historical principle of our discipline. Yet within the various types and special doctrines a large amount of higher exegesis has been accomplished by Weiss, Riehm, Schultz, Diestel, Weiffenbach, and others. But the *highest* exegesis in the comparison of types and their arrangement in an organic system with a unity and determining principle out of which all originate, and to which they return their fruitage, remains comparatively undeveloped. Indeed the study of the particular types, especially in the Old Testament, must be conducted still further and to more substantial results ere the *highest* exegesis can fulfil its task.

The *genetic* and the *inductive* methods must indeed combine in order to the best results. They must cooperate in every writing, in the treatment of every author, of every period and of the whole. They must blend in harmony throughout. On their proper combination the excellence of a system of Biblical Theology depends. An undue emphasis of either will make the system defective and inharmonious.

(4) *The system and divisions of Biblical Theology.*—These are determined partly by the material itself, but chiefly by the *methods* of dealing with it. We must make the divisions so simple that they may be adapted to the most elementary conceptions, and yet comprehensive enough to embrace the most fully developed conceptions, and also so as to be capable of a simple and natural subdivision in the advancing periods. In order to this we must find the dominant principle of the entire revelation and make our historical and our inductive divisions in accordance with it. The Divine revelation itself might seem to be this determining factor, so that we

should divide historically by the historical development of that revelation, and synthetically by its most characteristic features. But this divine revelation was made to intelligent man and involved thereby an active appropriation of it on his part, both as to its form and substance, so that from this point of view we might divide historically in accordance with the great epochs of the appropriation of divine revelation, and synthetically by the characteristic features of that appropriation. From either of these points of view, however, there might be—there naturally would be, an undue emphasis of the one over against the other at the expense of a complete and harmonious representation. We need some principle that will enable us to combine the subject and the object—God and man—in the unity of its conception. Such a principle is happily afforded us in the Revelation itself, so distinctly brought out that it has been historically recognized in the names given to the two great sections of the Scriptures, the Old and the New Testaments or Covenants. The *Covenant* is the fundamental principle of the divine revelation, to which the divine revelation commits its treasures and from which man continually draws upon them. The Covenant has a great variety of forms in the sacred Scriptures, but the most essential and comprehensive form is that assumed in the Mosaic Covenant at Sinai which becomes the *Old Covenant*, pre-eminently, and over against that is placed the *New Covenant* of the Messiah Jesus Christ, so that the great historical division becomes the *Theology of the Old Covenant* and the *Theology of the New Covenant*.

The *Covenant* must also determine the synthetic divisions. The Covenant is a union and communion effected between God and Man. It involves a *personal* relationship which it originates and maintains by cer-

tain events and institutions. This is Religion. The Covenant and its relations, man apprehends as an intelligent being with meditation, reflection, and reasoning. All this he comprehends in *doctrines*, which he apprehends and believes and maintains as his faith. These doctrines will embrace the three general topics of *God*, of *Man*, and of *Redemption*. The Covenant still further has to do with man as a *moral* being, imposing moral obligations upon him with reference to God and man and the creatures of God. All these are comprehended under the general term *Ethics*. These distinctions apply equally well to all the periods of divine revelation; they are simple, they are comprehensive, they are all-pervading. Indeed they interpenetrate one another, so that many prefer to combine the three under the one term Theology, and then treat of God and Man and the union of God and Man in redemption, in each division by itself with reference to religious, ethical, and doctrinal questions; but it is easier and more thoroughgoing to keep them apart, even at the expense of looking at the same thing at times successively from three different points of view.

From these more general divisions we may advance to such subdivisions, as may be justified in the successive periods of Biblical Theology, both on the historic and synthetic sides, and, indeed, without anticipation.

The relation between the historical and the synthetic divisions may be variously viewed. Thus Ewald, in his Biblical Theology, makes the historical divisions so entirely subordinate as to treat of each topic of theology by itself in its history. The difficulty of this method is, that it does not sufficiently show the *relative* development of doctrines, and their constant action and re-

action upon one another in the successive periods. It may be of advantage for thoroughness in any one department to take that topic by itself and work it out in its historical development; but in a comprehensive course of Biblical Theology the interests of the whole cannot be sacrificed for the particular sections. They must be adjusted to one another in their historical development in the particular periods. Hence it will be necessary to determine in *each period*: (1) the development of each particular doctrine by itself, as it starts from the general principle, and then (2) to sum up the general results before passing over into another period.

It will also be found that Theology does not unfold in one single line, but in several, from several different points of view, and in accordance with several different types. It will therefore be necessary on the one side ever to keep these types distinct, and yet to show their unity as one organism. Thus in the Pentateuch the great types of the Jahvist, the two Elohist, and the Deuteronomist, will be distinctly traced until they combine in the one organism of our Pentateuch, presenting the fundamental *Thorah* of Israel. In the historical books the Prophetic and Levitical historians will be distinguished and compared for a higher unity. The three great types—the psalmists, wise men, and prophets—will be discriminated, the variations within the types carefully studied and compared, and then the types themselves brought into harmony, and at last the whole Old Testament presented as an organic whole. The New Testament will then be considered in the forerunners of Christ; then the four types in which the evangelists present the Theology of Jesus, each by itself, in comparison with the others, and as a whole. The Apostolic Theology will be traced from its origin

at Pentecost in its subsequent division into the three great types, the Jewish Christian of Peter, James, and Jude; the Gentile Christian of Paul, Luke, and the epistle to the Hebrews; and, finally, the Johannean of the gospels, epistle, and apocalypse of John; and the whole considered in the unity of the New Testament; and then, as the last thing, the whole Bible will be considered, showing not only the unity of the theology of Christ and His apostles, but also the unity of the theology of Moses and David and all the prophets, with the theology of Jesus and His apostles, as each distinct theology takes its place in the advancing system of divine revelation, all conspiring to the completion of a perfect, harmonious, symmetrical organism, the infallible expression of God's will, character, and being to His favored children. At the same time, the religion of each period and of the whole Bible will be set in the midst of the other religions of the world, so that it will appear as the divine grace ever working in humanity, and its sacred records as the true lamp of the world, holding forth the light of life to all the nations of the world.



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